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THE ARTS

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CONTENTS

PAGE

FRONTISPIECE: PERSIAN MINIATURE *Attributed to Ustad Muhammad* 240

EDITORIAL 241

JOHN SINGER SARGENT *Forbes Watson* 243

ART AT THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY *H. E. Schnakenberg* 247

TRADITION AND ART *Leo Stein* 265

THE THEATRE GUILD'S AMERICANIZATION PROBLEM *H. I. Brock* 270

EDWARD BRUCE *Helen Appleton Read* 273

NEW YORK EXHIBITIONS *Virgil Barker* 276

BOOKS—

MEDIEVAL GARDENS (Sir Frank Crisp)
THE ITALIAN GARDEN (Luigi Dami)
SPANISH GARDENS AND PATIOS (Mildred and Arthur Byne) *Charles D. Lay* 289

ORNAMENT IN APPLIED ART (Weyhe) *Herbert Lippmann* 289

ETCHERS AND ETCHING (Joseph Pennell) *William M. Ivins, Jr.* 290

A HISTORY OF SCULPTURE (Chase and Post) *Lloyd Goodrich* 292

REVERBERATIONS: THE ARTS VS. THE NATIONAL ACADEMY 294



PERSIAN MINIATURE

Attributed to USTAD MUHAMMAD

Courtesy of Parish-Watson and Company *Sixteenth Century*

THE ARTS

VOLUME VII MAY, 1925 NUMBER 5

OWING to the fact that the National Academy is going to open its Centennial Exhibition at the Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington, D. C., next October, a fact referred to in a previous issue of this magazine, several letters have been received from artists, asking curious questions. After congratulating THE ARTS for pointing out that the word "National" in the Academy's title is misleading, since the Academy is merely a private institution, with private interests, they ask whether the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington is officially affiliated with the National Academy. One artist thought that the recent purchase of a sentimental sculpture group by Daniel Chester French indicated a combination of interests between the Corcoran Art Gallery and the National Academy, particularly because Washington is so inadequately represented by examples of the work of more important contemporary sculptors.

I am glad to point out that while individual members of the Academy appear to dominate the direction of the Corcoran Art Gallery, there is, so far as I know, no official connection between the two institutions. Theoretically, the Corcoran Art Gallery is the director of its own destiny. To dispel the belief that this museum, situated in the capital of our country, is strictly partisan in its encouragement of American art because it has shown such academic tendencies in most of its acquisitions of contemporary American painting, and because its exhibitions, generally speaking, close their doors to many of the most progressive American artists of the day, the Corcoran Gallery will be obliged to broaden its activities.

The suggestion that it will be quite simple for the Corcoran Gallery to prove that it has a deeper interest in American art than it now appears to have, by following the National Academy Centennial Exhibition with a fully representative exhibition of those artists who are either academicians that have left the fold, or who are too independent ever to associate themselves with an organization devoted to the censorship of art—this suggestion will strike all those who are more seriously concerned with art than with organization politics, as one which the Corcoran Art Gallery can hardly afford to discount.

As a matter of fact, unless the Corcoran Art Gallery does something drastic to prove that it is not affiliated with a private organization of reactionary artists, its position among the serious museums of the country will be severely threatened. Except for the splendid work being done by Mr. Duncan Phillips, Washington, in its encouragement of contemporary art, is probably the most backward capital in any country of importance.

The timid and conventional exhibitions taking place periodically at the Corcoran Art Gallery give only the faintest glimmering of what the artists are doing today in America. Only a few of those painters who do not play the game according to the rules laid down by the National Academy are represented in these exhibitions. Among the few, practically all are artists whose reputations are so widespread that even a timid museum is afraid to overlook them. Of the younger painters, less than half a dozen are represented in the Corcoran shows. Yet, it would be so easy to broaden and strength the exhibitions at the Corcoran Art Gallery if they were not arranged in perfect accord with the Academic system of censorship.

Exactly why Mr. C. Powell Minnigerode and his board of directors should be frightened by a private institution, posing as a national institution, why the Gallery does not dare to present an unbiased exhibition of contemporary American art, is a little difficult to understand. Such painters as Edward Redfield may be, and doubtlessly are, good advisors in selecting the work of their fellow Academicians, but Mr. Redfield, whose ideas are as

clear and frank as his painting, is an outspoken enemy of modern art, and to expect painters holding antipathetic views to assist the Corcoran Art Gallery in the selection of the important work of the more liberal artists, is rather futile.

There is no other way to explain the obvious timidity which the management of the Corcoran Gallery shows in the selection of its exhibitions. Either the management is afraid of its own opinions and, therefore, seeks the protection of the private reactionary group which calls itself the National Academy, or else the management is blind to what is going on today in art. Not to be interested in representing a just proportion of the most inventive adventurous artists of the day, certainly does suggest domination by a partisan organization, or ignorance of contemporary art. In either case, it is time that so important an institution, so favorably situated in the capital of this country, should cease its present policy of one-sided encouragement.

Quite aside from the question of broadminded interest in contemporary expression in art is the question of the responsibility of the management of the Corcoran Art Gallery to the institution in the first place, and to American art in the second. If the management meets its responsibilities squarely, how can it longer dodge the issue of contemporary art and be satisfied with a strictly academic allegiance?

It really can't, and expect the public to believe in it as a genuinely representative institution. This being the case, it must either cease wearing the swaddling clothes of the National Academy, or write itself down as being afraid to develop, so that the suggestion is pertinent. The Corcoran Art Gallery should step forward like a man, and declare its freedom from the domination of the National Academy by holding a genuinely representative exhibition of contemporary American work by those artists who are not affiliated with the National Academy, immediately after the close of the much heralded Centennial Exhibition.

FORBES WATSON.



CHINESE BRONZE VESSEL — CHOU DYNASTY

Courtesy of C. T. Loo and Company

JOHN SINGER SARGENT

By FORBES WATSON

THE most adventurous and inventive contemporary art is far removed in its aims from the work of John Singer Sargent, whereas, in academic circles, artists continue to suffer from the extraordinary domination with which Sargent reigned over the world of fashionable portrait painting. In a mood of exaltation, an academic painter recently protested that:

"Sargent is the master of us all. We have all of us, without exception, labored to paint a head, a hand, as Sargent has a head, a hand, and we have all of us, without exception, admitted our defeat. And our daily lives, whatever our expression may have come to be, are made up of the worship of light and things tangible, and of sober tones and sober colors that the master of us all, alone in our generation, has been able to capture."

Needless to say, an artist who, in this day and generation, is laboring "to paint a head, a hand, as Sargent has a head, a hand . . ." has removed himself far from the realities. Yet, who can deny that in mundane portraiture Sargent was a leader?

Two reasons account for his chieftenship over the kind of portrait painters who wish, above all things, to secure commissions. At the time when Sargent first won success in London, the American public was embedded in its most acute period of æsthetic provincialism and American collectors were buying in large numbers foreign paintings of extraordinary low caliber. The Paris Salon still had a reputation with American collectors, and commercial *genre* pictures, manufactured by the score for foreign consumption, were purchased by rich uneducated Americans at large prices—the same kind of pictures that we now find neglected and forsaken in the small auction room, where, together with much floridity and gilt, they sell for a song.

It was in those dark days that Sargent's first successful portraits of duchesses and socially great ladies began to make an impression on the American public. Soon the combination of the great names of the people whom Sargent painted and the brilliant facility with which the great man painted, carried his name far and wide through the press.

As I have pointed out in other reviews of Sargent, the neglect which the art of the sterner and deeper Thomas Eakins received from both artists and public during the rise of Sargent is the clearest indication of how completely the Sargent fashion of painting predominated. Practically no portrait painter, during this period in America, succeeded in securing commissions except those who, to the best of their ability, imitated Mr. Sargent. Even in the case of Sargent himself, the appearance of brilliant dexterity did not always "come off" the first time. The thought of the great man scraping out a head in some cases twenty or thirty times, and of the little army of imitators going through an even more desperate ordeal to achieve a final effect of dexterity, suggests an exercise of palette, knife and rags that will appear either painful or comic according to the individual reactions of those who ruminate over this contradictory process.

Everyone feels the charm of unniggled painting, of the fresh, clear, direct brush stroke. When this becomes the ideal and dominant factor in an artist's work, there should be no surprise if deeper qualities are often neglected and if superficial tricks of the brush become habitual in the constant effort to dodge fundamentals. Sargent, in his own sphere, was far above any of his imitators. Unless, however, we want to succumb to the thoughtless order of criticism suggested by the passage from an academician's letter, quoted in the first paragraph of this review, it is well to recognize just how serious the aims of an artist can be if he devotes his best years to glittering worldly success. Quite frankly in his youth Sargent gave up association with serious artists and went after the duchesses. Criticism of his work was as frequently adverse when written by those Frenchmen who were aware of the great accomplishments of the greater painters of Sargent's time, as it was flattering when written by those Englishmen and Americans who rank brilliantly effective mundane portraiture too high in the realm of art.

Owing to the fact that most portrait painters who pursue worldly success are generally ignored by the serious, their names so seldom come up in discussions of art that the unsubstantial reputations which they and their clients blow up for them remain unpricked. Perhaps the most serious compliment paid to the art of Sargent is that even artists and serious critics have given attention to his work. Had he been less superb in his mastery of what the outsiders call technique he might have achieved a splendid oblivion, except for the hand clapping of the duchesses. No one who paints can



PORTRAIT OF MRS. MOORE
JOHN SINGER SARGENT

fail at times to get a genuine thrill from the sheer ability, along its own narrow and exclusive lines, that the brush of Sargent frequently evidenced. He could also bring out with extraordinary clarity the accentuated characteristics of those sitters who, having marked peculiarities, attracted him most. He disliked neutral faces.

Looking over the long list of Sargent's achievements, it seems evident that he had appreciation and sympathetic understanding of a certain refined type of well-born and fashionable American women, whose position of social eminence did not begin to lose its color until American society, as they call it, began to feel the shock of an international mixture of races, ready to pour in and outweigh the English stock. When Sargent depicted these fair and lovely types with full enjoyment of the possibilities for pyrotechnics that were offered by their beautiful clothes (in those days less scanty than beautiful clothes are today) the dream was still alive in certain breasts that America was essentially an Anglo-Saxon and Puritan country. The more or less cloistered lady, a little too refined to be wholly intelligent about life, had not yet been disturbed in her faith and Sargent understood her, appreciated her rare refinement and sympathized with her. Surely, it was not when he was painting such portraits that he performed the antics recorded in Blunt's memoirs of going behind a screen and sticking out his tongue at his fair sitters. If any such tricks were played by him, it must have been before the height of his success, when he still accepted sitters who frankly bored him.

The habit of the American to skip the distinctions that exist between greatness and near-greatness has something to do with the extraordinary lapses in judgment that often betray themselves in the vast quantities of sentimental gush that the name of Sargent has brought out. Mr. William Lyon Phelps, a university professor, though fortunately not of art, writing of Sargent last year, declared: "If I were asked to name the greatest living American, I should unhesitatingly name John Singer Sargent." This may sound like extreme nonsense. The quotation is made not for that reason, but because it illustrates so aptly the American's provoking habit of exaggeration. In the same way, among Americans who discount the great gifts of Sargent, there is an exaggeration hardly less irritating. It is not necessary to attempt to prove that Sargent was the greatest or the worst painter in the world; either effort would be equally futile, though it has been so often made.

To arrive at something like a just estimate of Sargent requires both a recognition of the dazzling quality of his dexterity and the capacity to examine his achievement as a worldly portraitist without being stampeded by the social brilliancy of his artistic success. Compared with such overrated "old masters" as Romney or Hoppner, Sargent really was a great painter. Compared with Gainsborough he was lacking both in taste, color and elegance. Nothing as completely decorative or as graceful, nothing quite as elegant came from the brush of Sargent as Mrs. Graham by Gainsborough. On the other hand, Sargent quite outdistanced Gainsborough as a painter of men, although even in his best portraits of men Sargent's eye, in the quality of its vision, was not unlike the eye of a keen and snappy stockbroker. He had the business man's eye rather than the poet's, the sizing up eye rather than creative understanding or imaginative apprehension. He was completely objective and literal, that is as far as the cleverness in paint can ever be literal.

In characterization Sargent must give way to Raeburn both in straightforwardness and unconsciousness. It again suggests the difference between the well-dressed stockbroker and the well-fed member of a county family or the case of Anthony Trollope versus Sinclair Lewis. The vision of Sargent compared with Raeburn had more edges and less of the mellowing influence of port. Yet in painting women Sargent was both less conventional and less sentimental than Raeburn.

Van Dyck, whom Sargent characterized as "slick," was more able than Sargent. His all-round equipment was broader. He could play tag with Sargent at his own game of dexterity. He could compose and draw with a facility far more sweeping but Sargent was probably right in thinking that essentially Van Dyck had a vulgar eye. At soul he was a courtier, just as in his soul Lawrence was a flunkey. Lawrence often outdistanced Sargent in color and performed some miracles of dexterity that Sargent would like to have been able to perform. And of course, as for color, Sargent had little understanding of it. Yet, on the whole, Sargent was every bit as good as Lawrence and sometimes better.

Both Gainsborough and Reynolds invented a style that Sargent followed without adding much to it, for Sargent was not an original mind. He was more talented than intelligent. And if we turn to those other painters whose hands were quite as dexterous as Sargent's, such as Velasquez and Hals, we rise to a plane of art that, without being

the highest, is considerably higher than the plane that Sargent reached. These others were real recorders of a race while our own much praised great master took down only the records of those who could travel first class on ocean liners or who saw the world quickly as they sped from Ritz to Ritz.

In the company, however, of the British mundane portrait painters Sargent occupies the position of an equal, generally speaking. So that if some people are unwilling to grant to the single figure in American art, who in recent times had, from the point of view of mere fame, only one rival, namely, Whistler, the recognition that gives to greatness unadulterated, it is because this entire group of artists, among whom Raeburn is the most unequivocally sincere, diluted their gifts to compromise with the great world.

When we step aside from worldly success and consider the work of those artists who knew no compromise, whose efforts were not to please a titled or otherwise powerful client, whose entire effort was devoted to the expression of their own ideas as they saw them, a long list of contemporary artists and painters of the past must be given more serious consideration than can be given to Sargent. Reference has been made already to Thomas Eakins, the American, who with a much less brilliant brush, succeeded in painting portraits that, compared with those by Sargent, are a little bit like rocks compared with the froth of the sea beating against them.

As a decorator Sargent failed progressively as he worked at his difficult art. As a water colorist, he was a master of pyrotechnics out on a holiday. That the record which he left in portraiture will live after him, no fair-minded person can doubt. Portraits like those of the Wertheimers as well as that whole group of portraits of ladies, like the portrait of Mrs. Henry White—these portraits will always be welcome in the great museums and will always be looked at with interest by artists and historians.



L'ABSIDE DE NOTRE DAME DE PARIS CHARLES MERYON
Courtesy of Knoedler and Company



REINDEER (Reproduction)
Painting on rock

DORDOGNE, FRANCE
Cavern of Font-de-Gaume

ART AT THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

By H. E. Schnakenberg

I

THE average person visits the American Museum of Natural History to wonder at the birds and animals grouped with marvelous realism in as close an approximation to their native surroundings as seems humanly possible, to be dazzled by the Aladdin's cave of the Hall of Minerals, or to be awed by the giant skeletons of prehistoric mammals who lived their cumbersome lives in the great open spaces when men were not yet men. All these are there, and many more marvels from the world's ends; but it is not merely as a vast gathering of natural wonders that the Museum should be considered. It is too a great storehouse of the art of vanished peoples or of races whose powers of creation have been weakened to the point of disappearance in the deadening contact with our civilization. Naturally the greater part of this material is shown for its ethnological or archæological value. Nevertheless we find ourselves stopping again and again before the cases to delight in the sheer beauty of form in a Peruvian pot, or the mastery of space-filling in a textile or in a bas-relief, or the savage intensity of a Melanesian mask.

For man in the very beginning, power, incomprehensible power, was everywhere about him. He felt himself a part of his surroundings but, like the other animals, battling against the elements for his mere existence. Everything seemed natural to



HORSE AND COLT (Reproduction) SPAIN
Cave Painting *Altamira*

him; and in his earliest art, putting aside the first objects of pure utility, we find, scratched on stone or on a piece of horn, representations of the bison, of the mammoth and the other animals with which he came in contact, given with marvelous accuracy of perception of the special characteristics of each animal. Then, too, there are figures of women, fat-bellied, with pendulous breasts—the very symbols of fecundity which, to early man, was the chief requirement in his mate. For man at the beginning there were only these subjects to be recorded in his art—the chase with its life-giving quarry and the woman who waited for him to bring that food back to the cave.

Of the art of this earliest period we must be satisfied at our Museum with reproductions. There is, to be sure, a great stone with the faint outline of a horse and an endless collection of flints and other objects; but the small series of casts is of much greater interest. Especially worthy of notice is the group of female figures, carved of bone and limestone, culminating in that masterpiece of prehistoric art—the so-called "Venus" found in a cave near Willendorff, Austria, and now in Vienna. Reproductions can never, of course, be completely satisfactory; but so beautifully are these made and so small is the chance of our ever having important originals of this remote period that the opportunity for study should not be neglected because these are "only casts."

With the passage of time came a certain accumulation of knowledge and, with knowledge, speculation. Man found himself no longer completely satisfied with his old idea of the impersonality of nature's forces and guided by his innate sense of mysticism and romance, he began to attribute to them personal qualities controlled by supernatural beings. Gradually these controlling beings came to be identified with those special forces over which they held sway, and we find developing an enormous

and ever-changing hierarchy of greater and lesser deities who personified the involved workings of nature in all of the forms that early man could sense. Thus religion had its birth; man had created the gods. For peoples of earliest times, as well as for those races which have remained primitive, the instinct for concrete expression in terms of art and man's various relations with his deities have been closely interwoven. It was a religion of terror and of helplessness before the cruel powers of nature. Nature was always the enemy, the brooding avenger constantly waiting for the chance to wreak its fury for the least offense. So the host of supernatural beings who controlled the elements must be placated, cajoled into granting small favors if possible; and, in consequence, man's most able creative powers were tendered as offerings to his gods. He had not yet achieved the ability to think in abstractions—desires must be objectified—symbols must give concreteness to unseen forces. To convince ourselves of the tremendously important part that this externalization of thought played in the lives of primitive men, we have only to delve into that great and gloomy catalogue of beliefs and superstitions, Frazer's "Golden Bough."

Beside placing his art at the service of his religion, man has always desired to make beautiful his objects of utility or of ornament. But even here it is often extremely difficult to tell just where the mere decoration stops and where some form of esoteric and symbolic stylization comes in. We often think how glorious some fragment of ancient Peruvian weaving, or an Alaskan wood carving, is in pure design, only to discover that, for the one who made it, it was primarily a representation of some part of his belief in things supernatural, cryptic for the uninitiated in its intricate conventions, but simple as writing for those who have the key.

These were the immediate, compelling reasons for the creation of a multiplicity of objects of religious superstition and of objects of ornament or utility. But there was always some individual in every age who had, beyond the thought of the ultimate purpose of his creation, an intense love for the very doing of the thing. And such a one, in any period, we call an "artist."

II

Measureless centuries must pass between the first crude workings in bone and the next manifestations of man's urge to expression that we will find in our Museum. But we must not expect progress in this vast extent of time. The earliest rough stone images of Mexico and Central America are, for instance, of an accomplishment infinitely below that shown in the "Venus" of Willendorff.

Art has had, in all its lengthy history, mysterious deaths and re-beginnings, at times ages apart and



CROUCHING BISON (Reproduction)
Cave Painting

SPAIN
Altamira



ENGRAVING AND SCULPTURE (Reproductions) EUROPE

The Willendorf "Venus" is in the lower right-hand corner

Later Paleolithic (Old Stone Age)



STATUETTE OF A WOMAN (Reproduction) LESPUGUE

at places widely separated. The first feeble creations of each new start strangely resemble one another, but one race may have in its make-up the germ of infinite development while another may remain practically static. A pre-archaic Greek image is not enormously different from a stone god of the Easter Islands; but Greek art in the course of a comparatively few centuries flowered in the Parthenon, while the Easter Islander felt no spiritual need for developing much further the form which satisfied him. It is largely the art of these races of lesser growth in their formal expression that is represented in the Museum of Natural History. To be sure, the Mayas of Yucatan achieved a rich grandeur in their sculpture and in their architecture and the ancient Peruvians stand unsurpassed in the beauty of their textiles; but, great as many of these peoples were in the command of decoration, they only rarely aimed at the superbly simple kinds of form that the Egyptians or the archaic Greeks attained.

Of Maya sculpture in the Museum we will find a number of examples—mostly fragments from the various temple sites. There are two handsome bas-reliefs of conventionalized warriors, door-jamb panels from a small temple at Kaban. There are two very beautiful female heads, one with part of the torso, which remind one somewhat of early Chinese sculpture. There is something of the same lofty serenity that we find in one of those distant heads of the Tang period. Although the Mayas were the preëminent artists, the other ancient races of Mexico and Central America created works of only slightly less beauty. We may see here the head of the Aztecan water goddess Chalchuihtlicue, the cryptic "stone collars" and delightful little clay laughing heads of the Totonacs, the burial urns of the Zapotecans with their weird intricacy of ornament and the lavish objects of gold from Costa Rica. Then there is the collection of reproductions of the greater monuments of Mexican and Central American art, many of the originals of which are now buried deep in the dense tropical jungles of Yucatan, Honduras and Guatemala.

The art of ancient Peru was on a scale of less grandeur than that of Mexico, but in certain branches, notably the weaving of beautiful fabrics and the moulding and painting of pottery, they were unrivalled. We shall find in the Museum large groups of the pottery from Nazca with its richly bold painted decoration, of the remarkable "portrait vases" and jars in the forms of jaguars, monkeys, birds and fish from Chepen, and of others from the Valley of Trujillo and from Chimbote. Some of these appeal through their pure perfection of form, some intrigue us by tortuous mazes of linear decoration, while still others interest by vivid portrayals they give of the life and appearance of these vanished civilizations. Of Peruvian textiles—tapestries, embroideries and dyed fabrics—the



STATUE (Stone)
Photograph by Juley

MEXICO
Aztec



STATUE (Side View)
Photograph by Juley

MEXICO
Aztec



PIECES OF CLOTH PERU



CUP PERU



POTTERY VESSEL PERU



JAR PERU
Textile Design



BOWL PERU
Conventionalized Bird Design *Nazca*



SAUCER-LIKE VESSEL PERU
Mackerel Design *Nazca*

Museum has a matchless collection which is constantly being used by present-day designers as a source of inspiration.

From Alaska and from British Columbia are the gigantic totem poles and tribal images representing either a coat-of-arms or ancestral tree, or perhaps illustrating some legend connected with the family before whose house these enormous carvings formerly stood. They are often quite terrifying in aspect, but never stamped with that loathsome horror that one senses in the idols of the hot, equatorial countries, Mexico or Polynesia. Among the slate carvings of the Haida a small group of a mother and child is particularly worth noticing. There are a number of the superbly designed Chilkat blankets in which some natural form of an animal or a whale is carried to an extreme of conventionalization so that the initial form is completely lost sight of.

Among the many influences which have had a bearing on the inspiration of much modern art, African Negro sculpture has played an extremely important part. Taking the work of Picasso, Matisse and Derain, we find many a canvas where the painter has obviously learned much from the simple, swelling surface of a Congo mask or figure. In the African Hall of the Museum we unfortunately have not the same opportunity of studying Negro sculpture at its highest development that is offered by the great collections of the British Museum and of the Trocadero.

The African Negroes were a race whose art expression had but little growth; it is practically impossible to affix dates to their images and masks, because the same forms continued with but slight variations through the course of centuries. So that while the examples shown here, which are mostly of fairly modern workmanship, may lack the pure inspiration of the earlier work and of that beauty of surface that only time can give, they have much of the formal significance of the older and greater carvings. There are masks from the Congo, bronze castings and ivories from Benin, wooden headrests with figures of women and of animals, and carvings from the Kasai district.

From New Ireland we will find uncanny wooden images and a case of terrifying masks, some constructed on a foundation of human skulls, which were worn during festivals in honor of the dead. From New Zealand are intricate carvings and a grisly array of heads with the beautiful designs of tattooing still showing clear on the dried yellow skin. A number of strangely contorted wooden figures of emaciated men with staring eyes are from



PORTRAIT VASE PERU
Head of a bat used as a decoration on the headband



WATER JARS PERU



POTTERY JAR PERU

In the form of a guinea pig



BOWL
Spider Decoration

PERU
Nazca



PONCHO
Cotton warp, vicuna weft

PERU
Pachacamac

the Easter Islands. One carving of a bird in the same case is marvelously rhythmic as the line of its contour flows to a crest in the upraised beak.

Here, too, are tribally expressive fetiches and shields from New Guinea, carvings from the Admiralty Islands and from Torres Straits. Here is the Samoan tapa cloth, with its bold patterns, and gorgeous red and yellow feather cloaks from the regal days of Hawaii. In this hall of the arts of Oceanica it is easy, with the help of imagination, to conjure up a picture of some savage ceremony, in a lush, passionate landscape, accompanied by the incessant throb of wooden drums.

The various halls of the American Indians offer much in the way of beauty of linear pattern but with them we find little that indicates a sensing of form in its fuller import.

The Chinese room contains a group of exceedingly fine ancient bronzes, a few of the finest of which are ceremonial vessels dating from the Chou and Han Dynasties. An amusing little team of horses in bronze is worthy of notice.

This present noting of a few objects is little more than the merest summary of what seems to us outstanding in the vast collections of the Muesum; it is a personal preference and should be only a point of departure for one's own voyage of discovery.

III

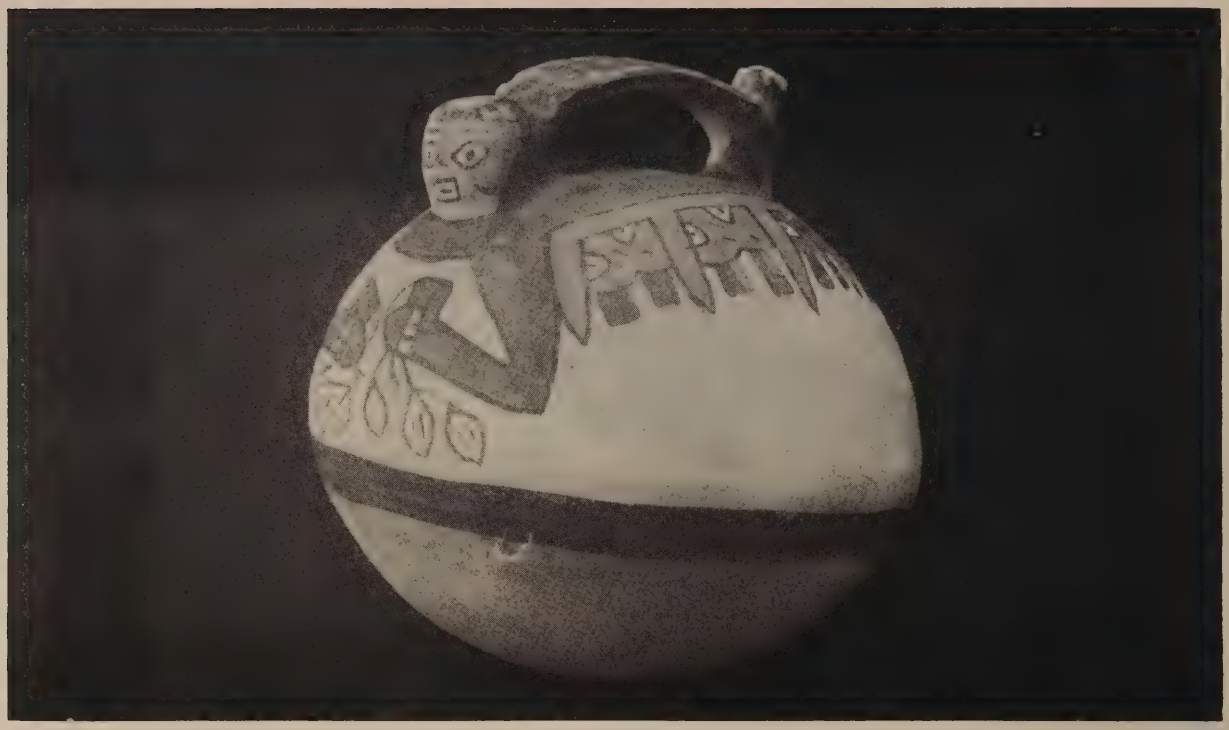
There has been, of late years, a great new enthusiasm for the work of primitive races. Up to very recently little of all this material at the Museum of Natural History would have fitted in with the scheme of what was considered worthy of the sacred name of "Art." Not many years back they would have been merely curios, brought back by missionaries to show in what a completely benighted state the poor heathen carried on his miserable existence. But the fact remains that this same poor heathen, benighted as he most undoubtedly was, had managed to live until the blessings, brought by the missionaries and other emissaries of our civilization, have driven one native race after another completely from the face of the globe. Perhaps, though, if the last debilitated members of a once proud stock end their lives in a state of perfect Christian humility, properly clothed in Mother Hubbards and properly law-abiding, it is worth the sacrifice. But then again perhaps it is not.

The Museum has, of course, long been recognized as a vast treasure house for the designer; but other artists, sick of the useless over-elaboration of meaningless detail, are seeking more and more for refreshment and inspiration in the powerful intensity of the Primitive. And for such and for the lovers of art in its myriad forms this slight outline may prove tempting to further search.

Editorial Note:—The illustrations accompanying this article are used through the courtesy of the Museum of Natural History.



MUMMY CLOTH PERU



WATER VESSEL — PERU
Conventionalized human figure carrying coca leaves — *Nazca*



WATER VESSEL — PERU
Humming-birds sipping honey from a six-pointed flower — *Nazca*



CARVED CANOE PROW
Wood

NEW ZEALAND
Maori



CARVED KNOB-STICKS
Wood

AFRICA



CHIEF'S IDOL STOOL — AFRICA

Wood



A GOD CHINA



A GOD CHINA



DOG CHINA
Glazed Pottery



DUCK AND ROOSTER — CHINA

Unglazed pottery



THE AWAKENING — MAURICE STERNE

This statue, now in the International Exhibition at Rome, Italy, inspired, as the author states, the following essay

TRADITION AND ART

By Leo Stein

THAT an artist should be of his time is quite true; but it would, I think, be difficult to prove that any artist who is sincere in his work is not of his time. A "time," except among savages, is never homogeneous. Only among them is there practically complete uniformity. As soon, however, as substantial diversity is found, the artist also takes his place as one of the factors in that diversity, and in so far as he expresses his own interest he expresses his time. The statement that "an artist should be of his time" is therefore a truism, or else it implies a judgment by someone concerning that which he holds to be the character of the time. But history shows abundantly that judgments as to what were at particular epochs their dominant traits have been largely mistaken, and that it is rare for any one who is keenly interested in the moment to have a competent outlook on its various meanings. Only when that moment has worked itself out in subsequent ones do its meanings become at all clear; and then, usually, they are not so very clear.

It has been characteristic of our critical time that even artists have defined notions on general topics; and there have been marked tendencies among them of late to run in schools—not naïvely as fishes do because they were born and brought up that way, but of set purpose and by virtue of conceptions as to what the time in which they live means, and what are its real directions and demands. Contemporary criticism often makes assumptions about these

things and because of these assumptions restricts its interested attention to what is held to be the right kind of thing. It thus loses sight of the fact that the right kind of thing in art is always the thing that here and now makes its appeal to someone as fraught for him with intrinsic value—value, that is, directly communicated to the beholder. There is no use trying to apply any other test. Six months or a year may be sufficient to change people's minds as to what kind of thing expresses their time, but the work of art which within so short a period has faded and lost its value, is rightly regarded as not having the kind of importance that it was held to have had, if in fact it had ever been held to be important. It comes to be reckoned then as of the journalism of art, interesting to thousands for one day, and forgotten on the next. It is held that there really is a deeper current, less agitated by the momentary conditions of weather, which constitutes the time's real tradition; and the character of such a tradition, that is, the way art manifests itself in relation to the time, is the subject of this paper.

Natural tradition exists in its purity in a society that is culturally unmixed. The teaching of the fathers is passed on to the sons, that of the master to the pupil. The motto of such a society is, in effect, "Ask Dad, *he* knows." Dad doesn't have many ideas about any subject, and doesn't even have to know what is *right* regarding anything of great importance. What he knows *is* right because he knows things in only one way. A culture in isolation tends to have such a uniformity. Habits, customs, clothes, cultural objects, vary not at all in intention, and not very much in quality. This is the quality of much savage and peasant art in isolated districts.

Change in primitive society, it is now recognized, has always been the result of contact. What happens then is that different traditions clash together. *Our* culture is, of course, the true culture, and the other is pollution. Those already imbedded in the one tradition will have none of the other. They know, so to speak, what expresses their time and their nature. There are, however, always some persons who love pollution, who find it delectable to wallow in other than their accustomed puddles. They are the worshippers of strange gods, the Infidels, as the party of the first part sees them, though to themselves they are the seekers after light. The light they tend to follow, is the alien tradition that has come athwart their old one. If they were to leave the old and adopt the new, they would simply have changed their allegiance; but this, of course, rarely happens. They are usually already so far subdued to the old that what they can take in of the new is only partial, and so they undergo change without transformation. They keep the old tradition but vary it in conformity with the new demands. But since these new demands are generally, in art, merely new interests, what they do because they are interested does not seem convincing to the conservatives who are not interested. The interested ones say that the others ought to be interested also, but the old-timers reply that they see neither the necessity nor the desirability of such a move. The progressives say that asking Dad won't do, that Dad doesn't know everything. Things are changing. Their motto is not "Ask Dad, he knows," but "Eventually, why not now." "We're moving toward the goal," they say, "towards which the whole creation moves. You'll have to join us in the end, so why wait beyond the morrow. The new day is breaking, and dawn is the best time for travel. The farther you're from England the nearer you're to France." So they set forth on their adventures.

In some such way as this change comes about, and progress, if progress it is, is made. For modern art there has been fecundation everywhere through the Greeks; in some places through the East; and through barbarian arts. Italy was stimulated by Flanders and Flanders by Italy; Venice by Florence and Florence by Venice; America by France and, on occasion, France by America. In our time when communications have attained an almost appalling ease, influences criss-cross like wireless messages in the air. In many cases young men came upon some thing that delighted them, and they plunged joyously in pursuit of it. So it was when the Italians first learned the oil technique which came to them from Flanders. Such was the classical movement of the Renaissance. There was then an influx of beauty and life—or so it seemed when compared with a sterilized convention—and men took to it with a happy enthusiasm. Many such cases could be cited, but this was not always the way that change came about.

It sometimes happened that there was a deliberate intention to encourage art of a certain kind in the interests of a political, social, or religious ideal. This was strikingly true of the art of the counter-Reformation which directly encouraged the ecstatic, emotionally overcharged, exuberance of the Baroque. Louis XIV patronized and fostered the art that should do honor to his stately theatricality. The Second Empire deliberately evoked echoes and imitations of the First.

Another kind of thing brings us more directly in touch with that of which we have many illustrations



THE AWAKENING MAURICE STERNE

in our time. Such was the Roman revival during the French Revolution. Republican Rome became the symbolic dialect of cultured France. A brave man was a Horatius Cocles, and a patriot was a Cincinnatus or a Cato; a regicide was a Brutus, and so on. The direction taken by the art of David was deliberate in the sense that it was a conscious expression of the time. In this respect, at least, it was like cubism. David knew that his time was a time of stern virtues, of exalted patriotism, of brotherly love—within limits, and he expressed all these things purposely in terms of Rome, constraint, and precision. But the whole performance was a little too purposeful to be entirely successful or pleasing.

The same is true of cubism, whose origin was in many ways similar, though the felt demand was different. The cubist did not find the time-spirit pointing in the direction of a higher morality but in that of a higher science. To the Renaissance artist, for instance, science meant the presentation of bodies and space in all their material actuality. To the cubists, directly and indirectly influenced by Bergson and modern mathematics and the reaction from photography, science meant abstraction from the material. They thought to give art a new direction by making it the expression of real and not merely decorative values, independent of objects. For a while, the enterprise was taken very seriously, and as so taken was a grotesque and utter failure. It was, however, a thoroughly representative instance of an art movement whose goal was much affected by a theoretic conception of the time's demand.

With the instance of cubism we step fairly onto the contemporary stage. We have seen that a simple tradition is one where no choice is possible because no overlapping things are known. Development is seen normally to occur when traditions meet, conflict, and merge, resulting in expressions that are new, and to which the artist is driven by his desire to say in public that which he feels is too good to be kept to himself. And thirdly there are times when the artist knows by projection what the right tradition is before he has made it because he understands the needs that must be satisfied, and then we have the program. A Wordsworth asserts that the time has come to cast aside the artificial diction of poetry and aggressively gives the dimensions of a pool:

> "I've measured it from side to side,
> 'Tis three feet long and two feet wide."

Our day has been the heyday for this kind of deliberate aggression. There has been in it an exuberance of a sort of analytic-synthetic activity: the first half of which means that the artists of our day have by thinking found out what was needed, and the second half of which means that they have made esthetic concoctions to satisfy that need. Programs flourished like mushrooms—the simile is a little drab and tame—I should say, toadstools. The world, it seemed, didn't any longer want the kind of thing it had, because our age was the quite other kind of age that the manifesto writer said it was; and what it needed—he hardly went so far as to say, wanted—was the kind of thing that the manifesto writer said he was going to make. More people, I suspect, applauded the diagnosis than welcomed the remedy. In fact the manifestoes led to very little art that was more than a few weeks' sensation. Never in the history of art were so many movements born and buried in so short a space of time.

One of the largest and most interesting generalizations about present needs related art to machinery. Thus went the reasoning: This is a machine age; the machine expresses the age; therefore the machine should be made the type expression. It is of course true that this is a machine age in the sense that we use machines more than ever. It may be, however, that it is peculiarly not a machine age because we are perhaps peculiarly not satisfied to be machines. The machine as an ideal belonged rather to the day when it was a promise than to the day when it is an achievement. Never since it came into existence has the question of its control been a more intensely conscious one. Nor need too much be made of the supposed discovery that machines are beautiful. I can remember no time when machines were not found beautiful by the people who do not need a guide to take them round the museums. This truth has now been published abroad; but that does not prove ours to be a machine age. Against the claim there can be brought a trenchant argument—the fact, to wit, that at no time since men first lived in stable groups has there been so little standardization in almost all human relations as there is today. There are more wide-spread, though non-coercive, uniformities than there were of yore—this is undoubted; but numberless social machines of all sizes and complexities that once worked so well one hardly thought of them as machines have been racked out of gear, and in many cases have ceased to work at all. All our social relations: marriage, society, amusements, our art expressions themselves, which were to express the great fact of the machine, are less machine-like than ever they were. The machine holds its enormous place in our

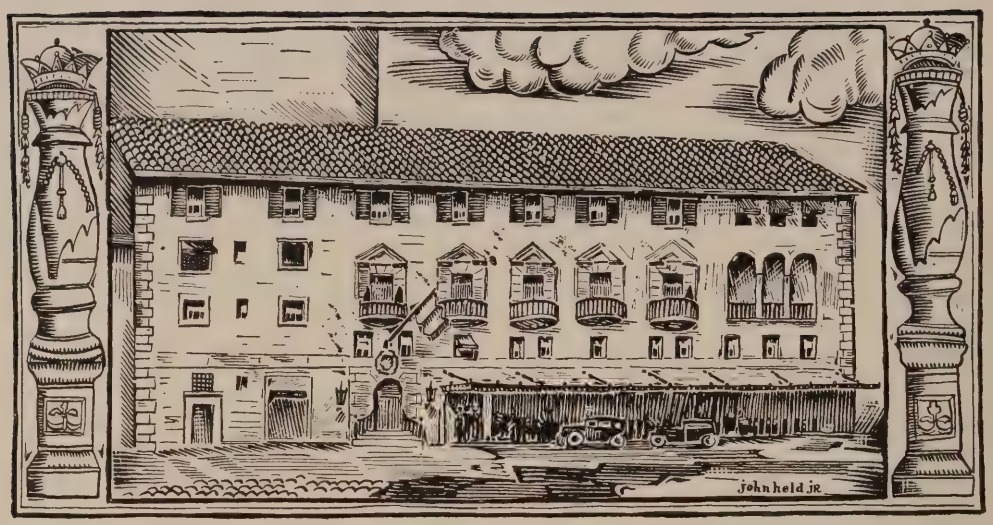
social and intellectual economy, but the society in which its plays its part is the least machine-like that ever existed. Among the things that art most tends to express nothing is today very machine-like—not even the control of machinery itself, where the ruthlessness of the individual is so strikingly in evidence; and it would, perhaps, be no exaggeration to say that the machine is just what does not typify the age. The machine is what we understand best and can best control, but never has society been so admittedly incomprehensible, and so helplessly uncontrollable. Quite possibly the ultra-romantics are nearer right in offering us their attitude as the real tradition for our time.

I have given this example somewhat at length to illustrate the absurdity of the attempts to define a tradition before it is made, and to prescribe the direction that it is to take. There is only one way to make of art a going concern, and that is the old familiar one of setting forth what interests one in terms that are both interesting and communicative. The artist's difficulties today are unusually great. He not only travels about as he was never able to travel about before, but in overwhelming mass and variety things travel to him even if he stays at home. Then the break-down—one might almost say the break-up—of the social machine takes away from him many of the comforting restrictions that a more regularly functioning machine imposed. He can do anything that he likes, and the consequence in the present state of confusion is that he so often does things that he doesn't like but thinks that he does. I mean that the currents of partial trends in the time coerce him to preferences that have no deeper and larger validity for him, but yet he is swept away by them because he is unmoored and can't be even sure that there exists a large deep current. Consequently there never have been more dogmas in art than in recent years, and with less of substantial basis or more of dogmatic intensity. The artist is today better educated in the school sense of the word than he used to be; that is, he can reason more at length with a feeling of knowing facts and theories; but he has so little notion of how hard it is to think anything through, that he can take quite seriously the most frivolous drivel. This was strikingly true of cubism in which the thinking end never got above the unintended level of slapstick; and I have illustrated superficiality in thought in the case of the machine idea. Not only the publication of programs but also the "intellectualism" of many of the younger American writers is here to the point. Their favorite critical term is "accuracy," though accuracy could hardly be more utterly in default than in a precise application of the word "accurate" to literature and art at all. However, its use is characteristic of the temper that is now almost depressingly in evidence, a pseudo-hardness and clarity of mind which makes sharp distinctions and is really singularly inexpressive.

The more generally satisfying art of our time, like that of others, will have to come forth from the interplay within a multitudinous actuality; and it will have to deal with that multitudinously, and with less of the pseudo-clarity that we find in our too forceful writers. The time for clarity may come, but it is not yet here. After a little while such writers as the later Joyce and D. H. Lawrence bore me to the limit. They handle more knowledge than they master, but they handle it with the pretence of mastery. Such actual mastery as we have today of that knowledge, and it is not great, lies in another department. I can imagine their books in the future producing on the reader an effect such as elementary narratives like the Gesta Romanorum produce on us—that is, the effect of a mere skeleton of narration without the vitalizing projection and envelopment which can come only when the imagination comprehends beyond the material. One cannot produce good art at the frontiers of one's understanding. A Matisse seems to me to have more of promise than all of the analytico-synthetists; and among American artists Maurice Sterne, whose recent work in sculpture was the occasion for putting these meditations on paper, offers an example of a man who has relentlessly and endlessly created for himself a personal tradition without ever tinkering with it from the outside. As a result his work is authentic, and one can take it or leave it as such. Its tradition is that of its maker, and its valuation demands no reference to whys and wherefores —which is as it should be.

My notion of the critic's function is that he should talk about things and ideas, which lend themselves to talk, and not about values in the work of art, which can be gotten only through the travail of seeing. Therefore I have discussed some of the prevalent notions that seem to be absurdly invalid and which, none the less, because of their measure of acceptance, stand between the spectator and the presentations of the artist.

I had long ceased to look at photographs of sculpture except from a purely documentary point of view, when quite accidentally I discovered this fact (which has doubtless often been discovered) and thereby acquired a new source of pleasure.



THE GARRICK THEATRE JOHN HELD, JR.
Courtesy of the Theatre Guild Program

THE THEATRE GUILD'S AMERICANIZATION PROBLEM

By H. I. Brock

AS Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Mr. Bernard Shaw to the United States of America, the Theatre Guild recently opened a handsome new theatre in Fifty-second Street in the region west of Broadway now particularly affected by playhouse builders. The great seal of the Shavian favor was affixed to the occasion by the performance of Mr. Shaw's admirable and amusing drama, "Cæsar and Cleopatra," the play in which the Irish dramatist twenty years ago boldly and in set terms challenged comparison with Shakespeare. It was by some imputed to the Guild as a merit and by others accepted with meek resignation that "Processional" was not selected as the opening bill, and the new theatre thus dedicated to that rising hope of the American stage whose gods are Jazz and St. Vitus.

As a matter of fact, however, the Theatre Guild has never been to any considerable extent Americanized. During the six years of its active career, it has devoted its energies and its very considerable abilities mainly to the Europeanization of the New York stage. The success of the Guild—of which the new playhouse in the Florentine grand manner is the proof and the proclamation—is, indeed, quite accurately measured by the success of this Europeanizing process, the extent of the conquest of the American theatre by foreign dramatists and foreign dramatic forms and ideals. A little while ago it seemed that the conquest was complete, that the American playwright had been evicted from his native boards. The best that can be said, even now, is that a more hopeful prospect is offered for the return of the native to his own in matters theatrical.

But I am concerned here with the Guild rather than the present state of the American drama. Now the Guild began its connection with the American drama by producing the Spaniard, Jacinto Benavente, as its first contribution. That was in April, 1919. The list of contributions in the subsequent years includes: Ferenc Molnar, Hungarian ("Liliom"), Leonid Andreyev, Russian ("He Who Gets Slapped"), Karel Capek, Czech ("R. U. R."), Paul Claudel, French ("The Tidings Brought to Mary"), H. R. Lenormand, French again ("The Failures"), Georg Kayser, German ("Morn to Midnight"), Ernst Toller, German also ("Masse Mensch"), Ernest Vajda, Hungarian ("Fata Morgana"), Henrik Ibsen, Norwegian ("Peer Gynt"); besides these Englishmen, St. John Ervine, ("John Ferguson"), John Galsworthy

("Windows"), A. A. Milne ("Mr. Pim Passes By").

The Irishman George Bernard Shaw is represented by "Heartbreak House," "The Devil's Disciple," "Saint Joan" and "Back to Methuseleh," in three installments. American dramatists are represented by inconsiderable items until we come to the present year with "They Knew What They Wanted" and the aforementioned "Processional." If it is objected that these also are too inconsiderable to justify the Guild in departing from a foreign policy, this writer retires from the argument.

The point labored at is this. The Guild could not in decent conformity with its record have opened its new theatre with any but a play of transatlantic origin. Therefore it is most fortunate that the organization's Ambassadorial relation to Mr. Shaw brought about the selection of a piece original to the English language.

Observe that this is a mere recapitulation of the facts. It is not intended to reproach or reprove the Guild for persisting in giving us good foreign plays when they might just as well have given us bad plays from Greenwich Village—which, for that matter, lacks clear title to citizenship papers in this republic. The Guild's solid service to ourselves and to our drama consists—so far—in exhibiting for our benefit such excellent and interesting examples of what Europe is doing for the stage that when our dramatists present plays for our applause we have a competent measuring rod. They are matched against a dozen of the best stagecraftsmen of at least half that number of nations not less civilized than our own and considerably older in social experience and riper in culture—at least some of them. This is exactly as it should be for the greatest good to the greatest number of playgoers. Though, possibly, a protective system like the tariff for profit only might be favorably regarded by some of our struggling playwrights.

What the Guild is going to do with the American drama, now that it has forced the American dramatists to meet international competition, is a part of the future of the Guild of which the new theatre is a symbol. What the American drama is going to do to the Guild in the fury of that competition is also a matter for the future to reveal. Broadly, the question might be stated this way: Will the American drama Americanize the Guild, or will it be the other way about? Prophecy is vain in these premises; an eager curiosity waits upon the outcome.

What seems appropriate to be said at the moment—and it has a hopeful sound—is this: The Guild, which has gone to Europe for the architectural effects of its new home, has, in the matter of these borrowings, shown a higher average of selective good taste than was exhibited, by and large, in the organization's six years program of foreign dramatic importations. Some of the items of this program were quite bad. Obviously the Guild is improving, because the new theatre is a very pleasing harmony with almost no discords.

Indeed, the only serious discord is the modern painted frieze, running around the auditorium under a richly decorated ceiling which owes its inspiration to a Florentine palace. The frieze attempts, without any notable amount of inspiration, the history of the Guild in pictures; in other words, it presents a series of cartoons of past performances and performers in Guild plays from Benavente to Shaw. Fortunately, the colors have been subdued sufficiently to prevent a glaring clash with their surroundings.

For the rest, the auditorium preserves admirably the effect of a lofty Italian hall in an old palace while at the same time it is excellently adapted to its practical purpose as a theatre. The walls are of a warm tone in rough plaster; the heavy-beamed ceiling is rich with decoration in dull gold and lavish but subdued color; the balcony is paneled in dark wood and the walls under the balcony are paneled in the same wood. Where the gimcrack vanity boxes used to be in old-fashioned theatres, there are on either side triple round archways closed by tall doors, also in dark wood, while above the archways are 'scutcheons hearing the Guild's device of the four allied arts of the theatre, and tapestries to relieve the monotony of bare wall.

The hall doors, which are for exit, lead out of the house on the street level, though to enter the auditorium you ascend a stairway of ceremony. The curtain, with a decoration bold in design but subdued in color to match the ceiling, makes all the fourth wall of the hall. When it rises that wall becomes wide open to the stage, for there is no proscenium arch. Thus is obtained an effect of the audience and the play being one—which is designed at once (as somebody said) to give vividness and intimacy to the play and to flatter the Guild subscribers with the idea that they are all one family party with Mr. Shaw and the actors.

The stage, by the way, is wide and deep and high beyond the average of theatres. For one item, the gridiron is ninety feet in the air. In an ordinary theatre this contraption is sixty feet up and even in the huge Century (which was built so ambitiously as the New Opera Theatre) only

goes up 110 feet. Likewise, the pits below the stage are deeper than customary and all the scene-shifting and lighting machinery is extremely modern and elaborate.

What is most unusual about the house, however, is the manner in which it is entered. The Florentine façade, with wavy plaster walls, balconied windows, triple arches and an effect of tiled roof, has iron grill doors from which a few shallow steps lead down from the sidewalk into a vaulted lobby, which in turn conducts to two spacious lounges on different levels. This arrangement allows for the slope of the floor of the auditorium which is immediately above.

The lower lounge is furnished with tables and tapestried chairs and a buffet. From the upper lounge the stairway of ceremony ascends to two vaulted corridors, one running back of the orchestra floor, the other back of the balcony. Floors, walls, stairways and corridors are of travertin or plaster in the same tone, and the whole arrangement lends itself to the illusion that going to the Guild Theatre is attending a grand party. It strongly discourages, indeed, the idea of neglecting to assume the polite disguise of evening dress before putting in an appearance.

There are club rooms, a library, workrooms and the like for the Guild's educational, social and professional activities; but it is the public part of the house which more particularly concerns us here, since the rest of it is mainly utilitarian. Both for the exterior and interior effects achieved in their chosen Florentine mood, and for the successful adaptation of their antique model to the needs, comforts and amenities of a theatre, no light praise is due the architects, Messrs. C. Howard Crane, Kenneth Franzheim and Charles Hunter Bettis. Mr. Bettis was the actual director of the work. Among them they have contrived what is, take it all in all, the most artistically satisfying theatre in New York as well as one of the most comfortable.

The Embassy of the Venerable Bernard of "Saint Joan" to his American admirers is, indeed, housed with so much dignity in such excellent taste that his personal presence at one of the future openings of the Guild is not in the least unthinkable. Nevertheless, to do the Guild justice, there has been no official intimation of any disposition on Mr. Shaw's part to depart from his resolution never to cross the Atlantic. At least he would be sure of a welcome from a public even larger than that which attends his official playhouse.



ROCKS AND OLIVES — EDWARD BRUCE
Scott and Fowles Galleries



CALIFORNIA HILLS — EDWARD BRUCE
Scott and Fowles Galleries

EDWARD BRUCE

By Helen Appleton Read

THERE is something imagination stirring, something idealistically impractical in the story of a man who gives up the security of a successful business career to follow the exacting demands and insecure rewards of the painter; which is what Edward Bruce has done. He is a New Yorker in the now rare significance of the word. His family had lived here for nine generations. He went to Columbia, played tackle on the 'Varsity Foot-ball team, studied law and later went into banking, which took him to first the Philippines and later to China. He lived in China some ten or twelve years. And from having in his boyhood been a pupil for a brief time of J. Francis Murphy he made the æsthetic broad jump of becoming a connoisseur and collector of Chinese art. His especial flair was for Chinese painting, about which there is less genuine appreciation and knowledge than about any of the other branches of Chinese art. A collection of his Chinese paintings and *objets d'art* is in the Metropolitan Museum. He was able, through the genuine appeal that the art of the Buddhist monks had for him, to pierce through the veil of a different civilization that hides the beauty of Chinese art from most of us, and to get at the essence of their quality. Because he always felt before a fine Chinese painting, as he expressed it, a "sense of well-being," he analyzed the source of this feeling. He learned his lesson of rhythm and design from the fountain-head. He learned from these greatest manipulators of space how infinity can be expressed through the proper relation of lines and spaces. Also, which was significant and which kept him from being an uninteresting Anglo-Chinese painter, he saw the difference which existed between the academic copies of the old and extremely rare Chinese paintings and the originals. Despite the exact perfection of the copy there was the difference between them of the genuine emotional quality of a first-hand experience and sterility. It was natural, then, that, with this taste in art, when he came to painting himself, his work should reflect certain of the qualities of the objects of his enthusiasm.

Business interests were constantly sending him back and forth between this country and the east. During his trips to America he augmented his Chinese collection by buying contemporary American art of modernistic type and Italian Primitives. During one of his trips he came in contact with Maurice Sterne. Incidentally he had been doing a little painting. He showed his work to Sterne and Sterne, impressed by the talent and originality evidenced in the work, advised him to go on. With the result that Edward Bruce yielded to his long suppressed urge to be a painter, gave up business, and went with his wife to Anticoli, Italy, Sterne's

present home. He has made Anticoli his headquarters for the last three years and the pictures recently shown were, with the exception of a few of the earlier ones, painted in California, the result of his three years' intensive work.

The paintings roughly divide themselves into two separate classes, those which are obviously arrangements and not portraits of definite places, and those which are more or less realistic transcriptions of nature in simple direct statements. As was the case with his Chinese inspirers, space is Mr. Bruce's perpetual accomplice. A sense of vast distance, of profound serenity, permeates his paintings even when he paints realistic close-ups of olive trees or eucalyptus groves. An understanding of composition so as to bring about this result is Mr. Bruce's greatest debt to the Chinese—this, and the fact that he understands the necessity of making a profound study of nature through a first-hand acquaintance with her. To do this he has set himself to learn the essential shapes of mountains, plant forms and trees.

The Buddhist monk painted on his rolls of silk reflections of reeds on a lake, mists on the rice fields, or the ceaseless dropping of a water-fall, only after he had observed them to the point of knowing their essential quality. In so doing he captured for us a bit of eternity, which endures to tell something of the profound beauty of nature until the delicate fabric crumbles to dust. What better foundation of study for the artist who chooses landscape for his instrument of expression?

Lest this resemblance and his debt to Chinese art seem to be unduly stressed, it may be said that only the analytical mind of the critic or some one knowing the story of Edward Bruce's artistic predelictions would see the relation that the ordered serenity of his landscapes bears to Chinese painting, since technically and in subject matter they are as different as the east is from the west.

The word serenity must be frequently used in any appreciation and analysis of Edward Bruce's painting; it is his essential quality, the source of his appeal. It is this serenity and calm certainty that have appealed to people dedicated to the strenuous life. In these pictures of light-drenched valleys stretching into blue-hilled distances, of tiny clustered villages, of patterned eucalyptus groves, of undulating fawn-colored desert land, of the green dusk of leafy wood interiors, we get a philosophic sense of rightness—that same "well being," to use Mr. Bruce's words in regard to his reactions to Chinese art.

The picture lover who is not a critic likes to feel somewhat transported in the picture that he hangs upon his wall. Without the faintest trace of sentimentality there is a glint of the blue flower in many of the landscapes. The layman has a picture before which he feels that he may lift up his eyes unto the hills from which cometh strength, or may say with Goethe:

"Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du."

He has a window in the wall facing towards lovely remembered or only dreamed-of things.

Mr. Bruce's paintings are the result of much experimentation and thought. He has not burst into paint. He has reflected, has tested this and that method of expression. Very different it is from the painting of the professional painter who has started out with school training and gone the commercial road of exhibitions and competitions and dealers' advice. Edward Bruce came to painting in his maturity. His oils express ordered thinking and genuine emotion; and with this he has developed an adequate means of expression, which is to say that he has style.

It is easy to say that he is modern, although whether he is so or not does not concern him in the least. He is unconsciously in the Zeitgest, which means that there is that quality of conscious arrangement and insistence upon design and line in his landscape which is the new spirit of classicism.

He has certain common-sense ideas about landscapes. When he paints a panorama of valleys stretching into an infinity of distance, he chooses a long, oblong panel; when he paints a hill climbing up into the sky, he chooses a tall upright canvas. It is the way the eye sees those views in nature.

It may seem forced and not quite in keeping with his Americanism that he should select an Italian hill town as the spot for his artistic activities. It is easier, however, when one has forsaken the obvious conventional paths of endeavor and done anything so radical as to give up a money-making career for the precarious one of art, to do it—at least to start it—abroad. His Italian home is only a temporary one. None of Mr. Bruce's canvases have the stamp of locality to any marked degree. The fact that Italy is paintable, picturesque in the accepted sense, has not governed his choice of subject. His landscapes are for the most part generalized, remembered spots arranged in panoramas a little nearer to the heart's desire. He paints a landscape concept, or a tree concept, or a light concept, or a wood interior

concept. Free from the crowding insistence of realistic detail, he can paint the colors and shapes of his inner eye. With Rossetti he can say "he shuts himself in with his soul and the shapes come eddying forth."

There is a theory promulgated by Kokoschka, the German modernist, and followed by some of the more radical exponents of *Expressionismus,* that certain colors are what is known as "herzen's farben," the colors of the heart—not the colors of actuality but the colors we think of when we remember loved places and faces. If we paint these remembered colors, we get nearer the true essence of a thing than any realistic transcription of the actual colors of nature can ever bring us. A trifle metaphysical, perhaps; but it would seem to have some bearing upon Mr. Bruce's colors; which are obviously not the colors of nature.

It would be an easy matter for Mr. Bruce to get a trifle panoramic, in the theatrical sense, in these idealized vistas of his. It is honesty and simplicity that have saved him. The real danger for his art, it seems to me, is in the direction of over-cerebration. He may commence discounting his emotional reaction to nature and become too much an intellectual, may be interested in forms and rhythms and not regard as primarily important their sensuous emotional source, which is nature itself.

In these days of searching for the essential qualities of American painting, when every youngster thinks he is right in line with the American tradition if only he will exhibit frugality and austerity in his work, the theorist looking for contemporary artists who exhibit Americanism will welcome the advent of Edward Bruce. His is the serenity, the intellectualism, the nothing-in-excess and the idealization which marks the American spirit in art and letters. While admitting his debt to the Chinese his philosophy is the transcendentalism of Emerson and Thoreau rather than the teachings of Confucius. His is no negation of life or passive contemplation of the pageant. Quality is the essence of his work, whether he paints the limpid light of an Italian valley or the clear hard sunlight of the prairie country.



A TUSCANY FARM — EDWARD BRUCE
Scott and Fowles Galleries



SPLINTER BEACH (Lithograph) GEORGE BELLOWS
Keppel Galleries

NEW YORK EXHIBITIONS

By Virgil Barker

WITH the exhibition just past, the National Academy of Design became, in a phrase of the late Elbert Hubbard, one hundred years young. The labored and shop-worn facetiousness of the expression well suits the character of the exhibit itself, which was a depressing attempt to brighten up and appear unnecessarily youthful. It was as if there had been a concerted effort to recapture a vanished liveliness, and the result was almost painfully shrill. This was particularly perceptible in such canvases as those by Charles Bittinger, Gardner Symons, Spencer Nichols and Charles S. Chapman; and in the prize-winning pictures by John E. Costigan, Ernest L. Blumenschein and Clarence R. Johnson. In all of these, and in many more, there was such a riotous conflict of colors that color had no chance whatever; what may have been intended as gayety turned out to be mere gaudiness.

When sixty years of age, the mother of Henry David Thoreau paid a call upon the aunt of Ralph Waldo Emerson. She went "bedizened with long, yellow ribbons"; and while they conversed about her famous son her hostess sat with tight-closed eyes. As she was leaving, the latter explained that action: "It was because I did not wish to look upon those ribbons of yours, so unsuitable at your time of life and to a person of your serious character."



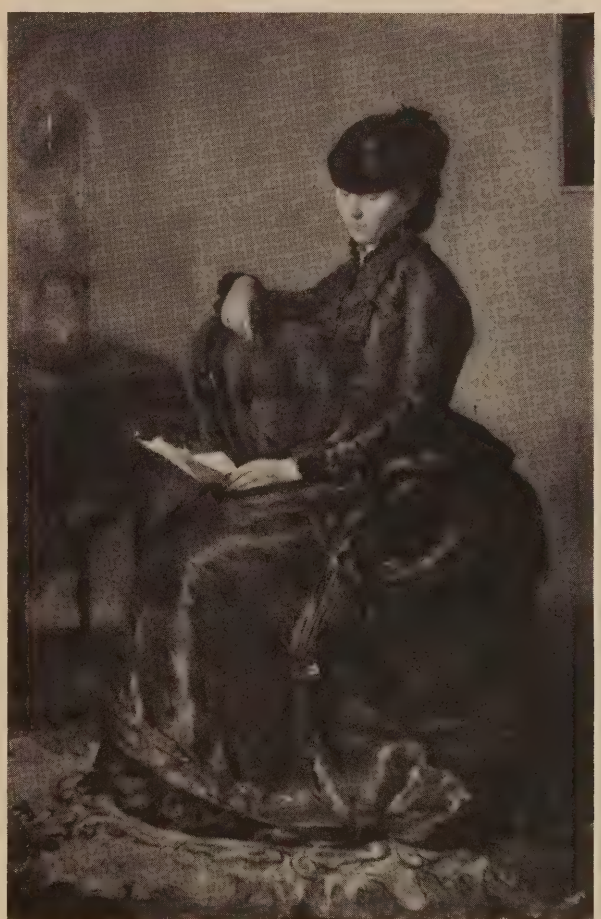
APPLES (Monotype)
Weyhe Gallery HENRI MATISSE

The Academy's ribbons were much in evidence, but to shut one's eyes to them was impossible. For that involved shutting one's eyes also to the few unpretentious good things almost hidden away beneath them—such as the pictures by Theresa F. Bernstein and John R. Grabach. Those by William Meyerowitz and Robert Brackman passed the jury as safely academic in spite of their superficial modernistic dressing; one by William Auberbach-Levy received the Maynard Portrait Prize. The india-rubber mountains from Taos were more in evidence than ever before; perhaps these are becoming a sort of firm trade-mark. Jerome Myers based his appeal frankly upon humorous subject-matter and won an appreciative smile; Frederick C. Frieseke's color was somewhat less sweet and more interesting than heretofore; Edward W. Redfield showed himself as honest an observer and as good a craftsman as on any previous occasion; and Ellen Emmet Rand's *The Sixties* received sincere admiration for its own sincere charm. If the Academy exhibitions could be reduced in size and composed of such pictures as those just mentioned, they would command more respect and exert a wider influence than they do.

The main trouble with them as they are is that they invariably contain not only weak imitations of the well-knowns by the unknowns, but even weaker imitations of the well-knowns by themselves. There is nothing like an Academy show to point the moral of the limitations of human endeavor. The would-be painter is so anxious to make his work optically distinguishable from the work of exhibition competitors, that he centers his efforts upon the superficial aspects of technic, and neglects to develop his visionary powers. Stopping to polish the husk instead of cracking it to get the kernel, his manner hardens into mannerism; instead of modifying his utterance to suit the ever-new conceptions that arise from fresh contacts with the reality of form, he ignores everything which does not fit into his laboriously acquired recipe. The result is a gradually thinning self-repetition—artistic death.

Life in Art

The only surety of artistic life lies in the possession of an intensely experiencing nature which constantly presses upon—sometimes shatters—the technical equipment in the effort after adequate expression. This was borne in upon me by a chance visit, on the afternoon of the same day of my visit to the Academy, to the group by Toulouse Lautrec at Wildenstein's. There was, first of all, the wonderful *Le Cirque,* already seen there last season. The largeness of the design, the sweep of the long-drawn curves, had magnificence



THE SIXTIES
ELLEN EMMET RAND
In the one hundredth annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design

and power. Of course, this particular picture was only a skeleton almost bare of flesh; but, like all great things, it was complete from its beginning. In the *Moulin de la Galette* the line came fully to life, catching the gestures as they melted one into another weaving them all together into one vibrant whole. The technical means of expressing this amazing vitality was as academically improper as the scene itself was conventionally vulgar, but the whole was terrifically alive. Walking in the narrow ways of technical genteelness will transform no painter into an artist; and organizations of painters which put most stress on the technical proprieties are moribund, however long they may be a-dying. Of course, such an emphasis is not in itself the cause of artistic impotence, but it is symptomatic; it is at least a confession that the inward life is lacking.

When this is the case, nothing can supply the want—not even an equal devotion to the most extreme "ism" of the movement. It requires only a single visit to an Independent exhibition to make it plain that artistic salvation is not to be found along the road of technical radicalism any more readily than along the road of technical conservatism. At the time when Glackens' work began to betray the influence of Renoir, the result was considered disagreeably radical; and things are different now, to be sure. But what has all along given that work its measure of life has not been the technical method by itself; it has been the mind which happened upon the method and found in it a means of expressing its contacts with life. Just now, Utrillo, who has worked out an individual manner of utterance by which to embody his undeniably vivid apprehensions of the world, is still looked upon in many quarters as disagreeably radical; but being radical in the same manner does not enable Medgyes to capture life in his work. It all goes back, then, to the quality of the mind behind the painting; and a real appreciation of the painting is neither more nor less than the power to share in the life of the mind which informs and animates the art.

The Joyousness of Matisse

To participate in the liveliness of Matisse's mind is as easy as it is delightful. It always has been, had folks only possessed the wit to perceive it. The successive outbursts of horrification which have greeted the various stages of his development have been merely the creakings of inflexible minds. For the art of Matisse is nothing if not ingratiating, and never has it been more so than in the group of black-and-whites recently shown at Weyhe's Galleries.

It was a very felicitous observation by the Englishman, Charles Marriott, that Matisse is the Whistler of the post-impressionist movement. At first glance, however, that appears to be a belittlement of Matisse; and it is, if the comparison be rigidly restricted to the two individuals concerned on the basis of their actual achievement. For the mind of Matisse is of a perceptibly larger caliber, and his achievement more substantial than those of the bantam-weight challenger in the ringside of the 'nineties. But then, the post-impressionist movement as a whole is itself more substantial, it draws more water in the stream of time, than the medley of sentimental academicism and super-sentimental Pre-Raphaelism which was art in the days of the dear queen. Thus it is possible for the art of Matisse to be in an absolute sense, so to speak, superior to that of Whistler and yet to occupy a somewhat similar position in relation to its own time.

At any rate, a very interesting set of parallels can be drawn between the two men. The work of both relies more upon pattern than upon design. The third dimension is present but it is often no more a contributing factor to the arabesque. The deliberate seeming slightness of both is based upon severe labor, although Matisse labors more intelligently and conceals his labor far better than Whistler ever did. The art of both is acute rather than profound—and here again Matisse shows his superiority to Whistler in concentrating all his faculties, but especially his wit, into his art rather than dividing and dissipating them in his personal contacts. Last of all, to pass beyond the art to the world's reception of it, both met with much misunderstanding, some of it deliberate, and bitter denunciation, only to win out in the end.

Certainly there could be no more convincing testimony to the Frenchman's artistic importance than the comprehensive exhibition at Weyhe's. True, some of his later things make greater concessions to the ordinary vision than his earlier ones; but the sweetness does not degenerate into mere sugariness, and the artist's integrity is not compromised. Rather may it be said that another avenue of approach is laid open for those who still need to be persuaded into sharing this lively vision of things; by spelling out his mind in long-hand, Matisse may win a much larger audience for his earlier and more suggestive short-hand notations of the bright and engaging patterns of an unusually vivid world.



LENNA WITH A RABBIT WILLIAM J. GLACKENS
Kraushaar Galleries



LARGE NUDE (Lithograph) HENRI MATISSE
Weyhe Gallery



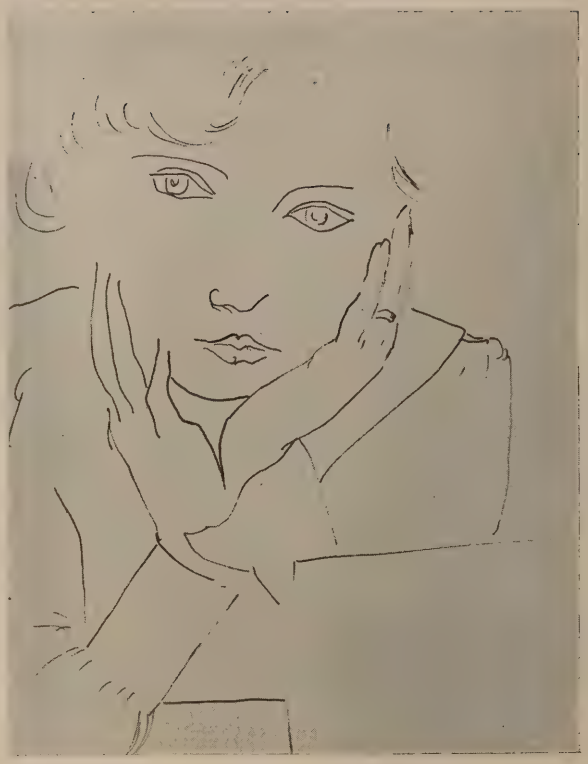
ARAB GIRL (Drawing) HENRI MATISSE
Weyhe Gallery

The Gravity of Canadé

In marked contrast to the exhilaration of the Matisse show was the succeeding one at Weyhe's, which was devoted to Vincent Canadé. This artist sees the world somberly, broodingly, and for the most part heavily. Indeed, the main obstacle to a whole-hearted acceptance of his art lies here—or rather, the obstacle lies not so much in the fact of the gloominess as in the over-frequent intention to be gloomy. This is not to imply insincerity, but it is to say that one observer feels a sense of strained joylessness which might often be relaxed to the advantage of the art. The back-yard view entitled *Brooklyn, Winter* is convincing without any admixture of purposed depression; and two or three exceedingly delicate pencil drawings of tree forms evince a markedly spontaneous responsiveness to pure beauty. But in many among the half-hundred canvases, the objects portrayed appear to have had melancholy thrust upon them by an extraneous will. Yet in a few instances where subject and mood coincide, and where the latter springs from a source deeper than a merely personal will—such as the two small landscapes, *Mountain Range* and *Stream,* and a couple of the portraits—the artist attains a solemnity which verges upon grandeur.



NUDE STUDY (Drawing)
Weyhe Gallery HENRI MATISSE



WOMAN'S HEAD (Drawing)
Weyhe Gallery HENRI MATISSE

A Contrast

At the Grand Central Galleries during the past month was to be noted an interesting and, to the thoughtful minded, profitable study in contrasts—between the work of Lillian Westcott Hale and Nicolai Fechin. The latter performs surprising feats of prestidigitation in paint; if one happens to be in the mood to watch The Great Thurston snatch pigs and rabbits out of hats, one may very well take it out in examining this painter's work. He manipulates his pigment very dashingly, and the faces emerge suddenly and, at first glance, inexplicably from unrelated swirls of it. He has the skill of a juggler who contrives—but for the moment only—to conceal how it is done; once the means is perceived, the game of finding what is there and what is not begins to pall, and boredom



VALENCIENNES
LILIAN WESTCOTT HALE
Grand Central Galleries

follows. Mrs. Hale's work, on the other hand, though far less showy, is equally skilful and wears much better. With none of the glittering bravura of the Russian-American, with all of the famous New England restraint, her drawings are not only more satisfying in themselves as works of art, but also more convincing as expressions of temperament. They afford no parade of technical histrionics, but simply the quiet suggestion of personal preferences as genuine as they are refined. Working wholly within the limits of a traditional technic, and content not to litter up the place by any self-assertive explosion of it, Mrs. Hale manages with a truly feminine tact and artistry to present a beauty stamped with the impress of her own personality.

Robert Spencer

The exhibit by Robert Spencer at the Rehn Galleries during the first part of April warmed the hearts of all who have, from the first, found pleasure in his work. For years his unmistakably personal manner has sounded a refreshing note in the various large exhibitions where it has been shown, but for a while of late there has appeared to be some likelihood of the artist declining into mere routine production of an established pattern. This one-man show effectively dissipates all fear for his immediate future, at any rate. Without any sudden abandonment of established habit, he has managed to refresh his vision and strengthen his constructive sense to a marked degree. There is true poetry in the unpretentious small canvases which collectively form something of a new development in his work—particularly in the *Woman Washing Herself* and in the *Bargemaster's Wife*. But the most notable instance of his progress is perhaps the large *Crowding City*, with its increased freedom of handling and solidity of design. Mr. Spencer has taken a new grip upon his technical equipment and upon his power of realization, thereby strengthening and consolidating his position in contemporary American painting. He is now sure of retaining and increasing his circle of admirers.



FROM OUR KITCHEN WINDOW
C. BERTRAM HARTMAN
Montross Galleries



EMMA AND ANNE (Drawing)
Keppel Galleries GEORGE BELLOWS

A Bellows Memorial

It is not likely that there will ever again be assembled so complete a collection of the late George Bellows' black-and-whites as that shown during April at the galleries of Frederick Keppel and Company. Though it was not called a memorial exhibition, it was that in effect; and as such it afforded a unique opportunity to study his lithographs, and also his drawings in relation to his work in lithography, through the whole range of their accomplishment.

Perhaps even more vividly than the paintings do the lithographs reveal the essential Bellows. Of course, the more difficult medium in itself affords a more adequate, because a more comprehensive, test of the qualities of his mind. The necessity under which the painter works of meeting and mastering a more numerous and complex set of problems affords a broader and surer basis for judgment as to his mental and artistic stature. But in the case of Bellows the qualities which made him what he was are exemplified in his lithographs as well as in his paintings; and indeed, the characteristics which dominated in the paintings, which did most to win for them their place in our art, exist more purely, more apprehensibly, in the lithographs.

When Bellows best expressed himself, there was about his work a very big swing, a great gusto, a "punch." As it seems to me, Bellows was almost never fully at ease when working in color; a retrospect of his paintings suggest the thought that his freedom in oil increased in proportion as his color scheme approached to monochrome. And apparently his ease of handling became most marked when he turned to black-and-white. By a paradox very familiar to workers in every art, the very limitation of the means of expression brought greater freedom of utterance.

With his first essays in lithography Bellows confessed himself a lover of blacks—deep and velvety or luminous and tenuous. On the whole, his best work was done towards the beginning; increase of facility did not elevate him above the rank he took almost at once as the most vigorous recorder of important and until then neglected aspects of contemporary life. A comparison of the original drawings and the resulting lithographs of the latest period reveals the intrusion into the latter of a rather unpleasant shine in the handling of flesh and a certain amount of mechanical tightening-up in design. The main line in the drawing of *The Drunk* is lively and varied in itself, but in the lithograph its prominence in the pattern is insisted upon unduly at the expense of naturalistic expressiveness. The drawing of the Dempsey-Firpo bout is notably superior both in design and in texture to the lithographic version; but even the former does not equal the much earlier lithograph, *Stag*



THE PROUD LADY
Rehn Galleries ROBERT SPENCER



MISS ELEANOR URQUHART SIR HENRY RAEBURN

Knoedler Galleries



BLOSSOMS
New Gallery

C. ZANON
Courtesy of Mrs. Sterner

at Sharkey's, which in some ways marks the high-water-mark of Bellows' achievement in that medium.

From the first, also, Bellows was bent upon telling a story, and his continued affirmation in his work of the right of the artist to do that constitutes not the least among his many services in this transition period. Abhorrence of what has been mistakenly called the literary element in painting, while entirely understandable in relation to the trivialized anecdote in color which prevailed so long, has yet narrowed the appeal and thinned the blood of many a sincere painter. Narrative is just as legitimate in painting as in writing; its presence or its absence does not by itself determine the artistic quality of the work. A strained avoidance of it can lead one about as far astray as can excessive reliance upon it; and a wholehearted acceptance of it by certain natures has often proved a direct means to full artistic growth.

In the case of Bellows, certainly, his unaffected interest in telling a story spurred him on to splendid things artistically as well as increased the popular appreciation of his work. Even so, however, it was sometimes a disadvantage, as in the instance of the war-time lithographs. With the exception of the Edith Cavell, the entire group now seem as ill-judged in their appeal to the passion of hatred as anything produced in America's most hysterical war-years. But taking Bellows' life-work in black-and-white as a whole, his relish for happenings, for dramatic circumstances, was legitimately developed by him into a strengthening rather than a weakening element of his art. The satirical tendency so much in evidence at first was gradually absorbed into larger and broader interests; and before he died, Bellows had set down in vigorously realistic terms, not untouched by a certain naive romanticism, the reactions to the contemporary scene of a remarkably wide-ranging mind. His work in black-and-white constitutes a permanently valuable addition to American art.

A Newcomer From Europe

Mrs. Sterner has brought over a group of paintings in oil and in water-color by the young Italian, C. Zanon, and shown them at the New Gallery. They reveal a delightful decorative charm in a talent which is so far content not to force itself unduly. A good proportion of these pictures openly confess the inspiration of Chinese painting or of the Japanese print even in such a detail as the stylized monogram which is used for a signature; and the oils suffer through the medium being treated a shade too much like water-color. But there are enough indications of a genuinely individual development to mark the painter as one worth watching. In particular, some of the water-colors

which, without any sacrifice of decorative quality, come closer than the rest to a realistically individual characterization of their subject-matter, are admirable.

The Art of Raeburn

When once the primacy of any painter in his age is firmly established, the question of the exact positions of the others becomes of secondary interest; but the gradual readjustment still in progress between the various members of the eighteenth century British school of portraitists lends something of a sporting interest to the brilliant group of works by Raeburn just shown at Knoedler's. It is worthy of serious consideration whether this Scots painter is not, after all, the most admirable practitioner of his time, whether he has not a more impressive achievement to his credit than any of his English contemporaries, who during their lifetimes enjoyed greater fashionable acclaim and since their deaths have been more eagerly sought after by collectors. Of course, this question, however settled, can have no significance except as an expression of the artistic preferences of our own age; but it is possible that simply bringing it up for discussion is an indication of an increase of intelligence and a tendency to prefer solidity and soundness to flashiness and superficialty.

At any rate, the brilliancy which Raeburn shares to a certain extent with his age is, by this exhibition, shown to have a more substantial constructive basis than that of Romney, Gainsborough, or Reynolds. There is more character, both to the portrait subjects and to the portraitist. Raeburn's women have their full measure of charm even when compared with the more famous graces of the London-painted belles; but it is in his portraits of men especially that Raeburn shows his own virility. The men of his contemporaries are almost all a little foppish; by the interposition of the painter's own nature they are seen foppishly even when not foppish themselves. Only Sir Joshua occasionally rose above this habit of mind, and the male portraits of the others are often in effect only portraits of slightly less feminine women. In marked contrast Raeburn's men are one and all a man's men, seen with a truthfulness and a forthrightness undiluted by the fashionable sugariness of the moment. Raeburn could be dull, as he is in one or two of the present examples, but he could not be insipid.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Catalogue of the Indian Collections. Part IV, by Ananda K. Coomaraswamp. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1924. ($3.75.)

Angelica Kauffmann. By Lady Victoria Manners and Dr. G. C. Williamson. New York: Brentano's, 1925. ($17.50.)

Everyday Art. By Ami Mali Hicks. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1925. ($3.00.)

Landscape Painting. By Adrian Stokes. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1925. ($5.00.)

Confessions of a Dealer. By Thomas Rohan. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1925. ($3.50.)

Advertising and British Art. By Walter Shaw Sparrow. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head. New York: Brentano's, 1924. ($12.00.)

Tradition and Jazz. By Fred Lewis Pattee. New York: The Century Company, 1925. ($2.00.)

Adventures of a Scholar Tramp. By Glen H. Mullin. New York: The Century Company, 1925. ($2.00.)

The Creative Spirit: An Inquiry into American Life. By Rollo Walter Brown. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1925. ($2.50.)

William Blake in this World. By Harold Bruce. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925. ($3.00.)

Troubadour: An Autobiography. By Alfred Kreymborg. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925. ($3.00.)

The Newer Spirit. By V. F. Calverton. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925. ($2.50.)

The Beardsley Period. By Osbert Burdett. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925. ($2.50.)

The Bookplate Annual for 1925. Edited by Alfred Fowler. Kansas City: Alfred Fowler, 1925. ($5.00.)



THE DRUMMOND CHILDREN
Knoedler Galleries SIR HENRY RAEBURN

BOOKS

Mediæval Gardens: By Sir Frank Crisp (Edited by Catherine Childs Patterson). 2 volumes. New York, Brentano's. ($35.00.)

The Italian Garden: By Luigi Dami. (Translated by L. Scopoli). New York, Brentano's. ($25.00.)

Spanish Gardens and Patios: By Mildred Stapley Byne and Arthur Byne. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company. New York, Architectural Record; 1924. ($15.00.)

These three books represent what may be called the last word in scholarly research, for when one studies all that can be found on a subject of which there are few records and examines thoroughly something that scarcely exists and explores the history of things which have little history and that unimportant, it is to be hoped that no one will again go over the ground.

"Mediæval Gardens" is a costly work in two volumes which contain, one imagines, reproductions of all the contemporary paintings, frescos, illuminations and wood cuts of any scene which can, by courtesy, be called a garden. It is an interesting collection of mediæval pictures in most of which plants and trees appear as accessories of the Passion or of the story of some saint. The value of a picture in which a fence of wattles surrounds the figure of the Virgin and Child as a garden document is questionable. Wattle fences of course are primitive and are found in many primitive societies.

Nor can we take seriously the deduction of the author that since few plants are represented in the flower beds, sparse planting was the rule. It is to take the matter too seriously to take it so, for anyone knows that plants do not grow that way. We know, too, that the mediæval artist was not representative or naturalistic and drew one plant because it was less confusing than a bed of many plants and his object was to convey information to the illiterate as easily as possible. The author also dwells upon the immemorial custom of raising beds above the surrounding walks. It is fair to consider this, like the wattles, as only primitive.

It is a just inference from the facts which have come down to us that gardens as we know them did not exist in mediæval times and that the design and planting of mediæval courtyards must remain a subject on which intuition and desire are as valid reasons as research for forming our beliefs. Certainly Fra Angelico's "Betrayal" cannot be considered a document in the history of gardening.

"The Italian Garden" is a collection of reproductions of old plans and perspectives and modern photographs of well known Italian gardens. It is interesting to the minute archeologist but tells little in additional to what is already known to the designer or lover of gardens.

"Spanish Gardens and Patios" is a disappointment aside from its carelessly written text, in that it proves the rarity and comparative insignificance of gardens in Spain. The gardens of the Alcazar, the Alhambra or the Generalife are well known and beautiful. They are interestingly shown in photographs and there are valuable plans and details. The other gardens are not important, or they are so restricted in their possibilties by the arid climate that they have little to offer us in suggestion or example.

Charles Downing Lay.

Ornament in Applied Art. New York: E. Weyhe, 1924. ($50.00.)

The gentleman might have been the model for a Rollin Kirby caricature of Capital or The Trusts. It was amid the mosaics of the narthex of St. Mark's in Venice. What I overheard him say to his similar but architecturally bent child was: "Son, is it not remarkable that they could have done such beautiful work so long ago?"

It is disturbing to complacency to realize that they do such beautiful work today. One lives along nicely enough with one's putty-colored rug, "Agate" kitchen ware, "repeat" cretonnes, pristine superheterodyne dials, leather office easy-chairs and other undecorated objects. One turns to "genuine antiques" or replicas of museum pieces for that missing something or other. There is the joy of utility in what we make for use in the Age of Industry—but beauty seems to be reputed and antique. Here, however, is this startling thought. Beauty can be modern. Page after page—the greater part of this book indeed—beautifully reproduced color plate after color plate is labeled "Present Time"! In Oceania, Haiman, the Aru Islands, Tibet, the Cameroons, Morocco, Lithuania, Yeman, Abyssinia, Siam, Punjab and a great many easy ones such as Ukraine, Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, China, Japan or Russia—indeed, it seems, in the major part of this terrestrial sphere there are humans creating beauty today. In all these places, it would seem,

the useful object can be and is a beauteous object.

All this vast portion of the populated lands is evidently yet in the backward days of not making things as we make them! We make potteries, glass ware, textiles and so do these others—but with what a difference! It is almost uncanny, their doing such beautiful things today. Antique dealers had better take heed and turn importers.

This collection of so-called primitive works of art, then, rubs into consciousness the realization that wherever on this earth the machine civilization lords, the joy of patterning is lost and traditional subjects die. Ornament must become an entirely new thing growing out of new culture traditions of this day; we seem cut off from the pictorial past and will have to evolve new symbols of new ideals. To one in this day and age, fed up with advertising "art," drugged with neo-Puritanism and shot full of the idea that "you can't live with" this, that and the other virulent design—this book is a mad revel of creativeness in color, pattern, line and form—and what a relief!

That the scientists, collectors, photographers, painters and printers of this volume have cooperated to make it a very perfect book of ornament will make it more of a pleasure to those who are happy playing with beautiful things and more concisely useful to those who are fortunate enough to work with it. This volume is of examples in European museums and private collections and there could well be another published of similar work assembled in the Americas, for this continent now rivals the others in its artistic possessions.

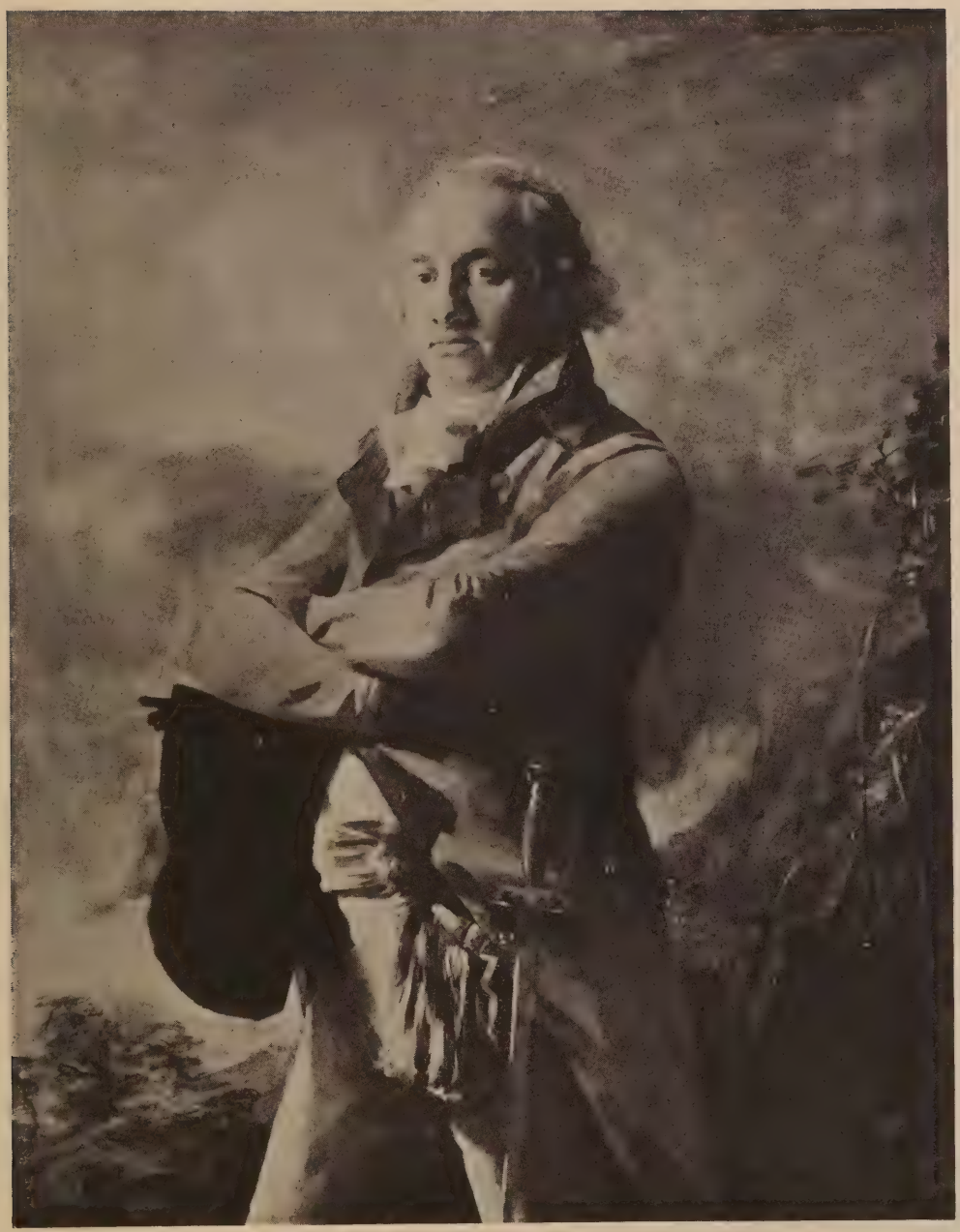
HERBERT LIPPMANN.

ETCHERS AND ETCHING. By JOSEPH PENNELL, N.A. (Second Edition). New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924. ($12.50.)

Mr. Pennell calls his book "Etchers and Etching by Joseph Pennell," and of course, as he wrote it, he is at liberty to call it anything he likes, but it really is only an account of "The Prides and Prejudices of Joseph Pennell"—an intimate literary portrait of the speech and mind and manners of its maker. In the days of his youth, had he enjoyed the benefits of an Oxford education he might have called it "An Apology"; and had it been written two hundred years ago, the elegant might have called it a "Counterfeit Presentment." In time it will take its place among neither the historical works nor the technical treatises but with the other comic character sketches, and in the libraries, because of its size, upon one of the lower shelves.

At first one was rebuffed by the way in which the author used words (as Jonathan Swift said, by "that quality of his voluminous writings which the poverty of the English language compels me to call his style"); and then one was puzzled to find out what the subject matter of the book really was, lying as it did like the thin ham in a boarding house sandwich between the alternating pages of blank white paper. (Mr. Pennell expresses such contempt for those authors who "pad" their books!) But after a while it appeared that Mr. Pennell was only talking about himself apropos etchers and etching, and as soon as that was realized the true end and aim of the book became apparent—to prove that there have been only two really great etchers, Mr. Whistler and another that modesty prevents Mr. Pennell from mentioning. One can't help wondering to oneself: "Why drag in Velasquez?"

Priding himself upon his originality and all that sort of thing, Mr. Pennell has reversed the order of its two nouns and taken Hamerton's title for his own; he has taken Hamerton's text and where Hamerton praised he has damned, and vice versa. Where Hamerton laboriously wrote the flaccid cultivated prose of his period, Mr. Pennell even more laboriously writes the bombastic jargon of another. And thus Mr. Pennell's book is one of the intellectual curiosities of the time. Proud of his taste and knowledge, he has forgotten that the years have flown by and that in 1925 the attitude of the rebel of 1884 is seen not as originality but merely as the more or less mechanical reverse of something long since outmoded and forgotten. One might have thought that, for all his aversion to it, Mr. Pennell would have taken some notice of some of the water that has gone under the bridges since he got his first and his last lessons in etching and artistic comprehension. The issue today is not what it was in Chelsea forty years ago; the prints of that time, like the ideals of that time, are no longer fought about and are very seldom thought of. The great rumpuses between the mighty men of the eighties about etching were only a symptom of the public's and the artists' ignorance of etching, unless it be considered that they were not impossibly a means of advertising one's wares. Today Whistler and Haden and Hamerton and Oscar Wilde and Ruskin are all very dead; and the greater part of the things they stood for are too—especially those that Whistler stood for. Yet Mr. Pennell is still busy monotonously thumping his old broken tom-tom and uttering the war cries of his youth—a com-



CAPTAIN BIRRELL · SIR HENRY RAEBURN

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mon scold, indulging in vilification as unpleasant as it is acrid, stale, and noisy.

So much for Mr. Pennell's general attitude; now to come down seriously to an examination of his authority to speak about the etcher's craft, a thing the more necessary in view of his repeated condemnations of every one else who has ever expressed an idea or an opinion on the subject. He tells us that Dürer's well known print of the Cannon is an engraving, that it is an etching, that it is an etching made with an engraving tool. Speaking of Goya he remarks that in the British Museum there is "a drawing called, or so I have called it, *The Garrotted;* it may be a print, an etching of the same subject, or a lithographic transfer worked upon." Neither of these two lists of statements is the result of carelessness, as each of them has been modified in this second edition, improved and added to; but they prove conclusively that this great authority is unable to tell the difference between an etching and an engraving, or that between an etching and a lithograph.

Mr. Pennell raises a great hubbub about matters artistic as well as matters technical; and oddly, curiously, perversely, quite naturally, he is just as convincing about it. Speaking of Rembrandt's etchings of religious subjects, he dismisses them as "mostly machines and pot boilers" and sums them up by saying that "in the sense of real etching, they are not etchings." But he does find that Rembrandt's "*Hog* and *Shell* are most interesting." And then he seeks to gather strength for his argument by citing with approval the Rembrandtian labors of those two great authorities, Dr. John C. Van Dyke and Dr. Hans Wolfgang Singer. He calls Meryon's *Abside* "a stupid rendering of a magnificent subject, meanly seen, poorly drawn, badly painted," and yet he finds Felix Buhot brilliant, "his studies of Paris and London were an inspiration to many moderns. He it was who first showed that there was picturesque material for etching in a cab stand." But the author's restraint and balance are perhaps seen most typically in the following carefully measured statement about Whistler's dry point of *Weary:* "nothing so beautiful, so weary, so true has been done in ancient or modern art." Of Whistler's *Beggars* he remarks "the lines themselves are wonderful, not meaningless like Rembrandt's endless hatchings." Mr. Pennell would doubtless be surprised to be called a purist, an academician and a pedant—but he is all of those things, and a few more into the bargain. Incidentally, he loathes etching.

We don't wonder that Whistler prayed to be delivered from his friends, for today long after the event we do too. WILLIAM M. IVINS, JR.

A HISTORY OF SCULPTURE: By GEORGE HENRY CHASE and CHANDLER RATHFON POST. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1924. ($4.75.)

This is the second of a series of books designed for use in higher institutions of learning as well as for the general reader, and representing to a large extent the work of members of the faculty of Harvard. A history of architecture appeared several years ago, and a volume on painting is now in preparation. The general editorship of the series is in the hands of Professor Chase, who contributes the section on ancient sculpture in the present volume, the bulk of the book being the work of Professor Post.

Under such auspices, the book could not fall short in the scholarly virtues, and indeed within its limits it is written with admirable thoroughness and accuracy. There is probably no general history of sculpture which presents in the same compass so many of the latest results in archeology and historical research; and on the other hand it includes the most recent development, sections being devoted to such men as Archipenko and Mestrovic.

The attitude throughout, of course, is conservative. This becomes apparent when one examines the scope of the book. No space is given to the sculpture of such primitive peoples as the African negroes, the South Sea Islanders, or the Alaskan Indians. The immensely vital and mature art of ancient Peru, which has so many parallels with that of Egypt, is not mentioned; and the Orient, including India, China, and Japan, is accorded only twenty pages. In view of the large amount of space devoted to decidedly minor eighteenth and nineteenth century Europeans, this seems out of all proportion.

The same lack of sympathy with primitive and exotic art is shown in the treatment of sculpture previous to the "great age" in Greece. It is strange to see Professor Chase finding fault with Assyrian sculptures because of their inaccuracy, or to hear him say of early Greek work that it reveals "an art in its infancy, but already giving promise of better things." To approach primitive art from this angle would seem to be unduly limiting one's viewpoint, particularly in the case of sculpture, in which some of the greatest achievements have been among primitive peoples.

In the discussion of more civilized work this naturalistic bent seems less out of place, and the

scholarship of the authors has a better chance to function. The treatment is refreshingly free from subjective theorizing, and is admirably concise. There is perhaps an excessive tendency to amass facts, to catalogue, and to label with such tags as "classic" and "baroque." The book moves at a somewhat pedestrian gait; great and small are treated in much the same fashion, and when a Donatello or a Michelangelo appears he merely receives a more extended notice than a Puget or a Schlüter. This tendency to encyclopedic treatment is particularly noticeable in the sections devoted to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, where much space is given to work which may be "representative" but which is certainly dull. One could wish for more frequent flashes of insight and satire. Certainly any account of nineteenth century British sculpture is inadequate without humor.

In spite of its superiority to the average textbook in its field, the book retains many of the forbidding features of its species. Not the least of these is the way in which the illustrations are placed in the text, so that one is forced to read all around them. In many cases they are also entirely too small, so that the more intricate and monumental pieces are practically meaningless. This seems a pity, for the illustrations are excellently chosen and the reproduction is mechanically perfect. It would seem better to have had fewer cuts and made them all full-page. It can be seen that whatever faults the book may have are the faults of the textbook and the academic viewpoint in general. Within very definite limitations it takes its rank as one of the most capable books in its field.

LLOYD GOODRICH.



LANDSCAPE (Wash Drawing) ANDRE DUNOYER DE SEGONZAC

REVERBERATIONS: THE ARTS vs. THE NATIONAL ACADEMY

The strong stand taken by THE ARTS editorially in the April issue against the "National" Academy's proposed campaign for a fund of six million dollars has met with the most decided approval and encouragement from all quarters. We print herewith a few specimens of the vigorous protests received in this office. Only one letter supports the Academy's scheme, and that is anonymous.

In an editorial headed "Century of the Academy," Frederick James Gregg, in the *New York Telegram,* after pointing out the fallacy of the Academy's use of the word "national," continues in this vein:

"If you say 'academic,' what do you mean? You define a state of mind which involves distrust of what the best artists of the period are trying to express. Those who hate the Post-Impressionists are but the successors of those who hated the Impressionists. And so it will be always.

"It would be possible to make an imposing list of American painters and sculptors of eminence who never belonged to the Academy. Perhaps a more significant roll would contain the names of those artists who, though members, had despaired of the institution and stopped sending to its exhibitions.

"The Academy, however, serves one useful purpose. It affords a standing demonstration of the eternal fact that no work of genius or even high talent ever resulted from the combined intelligence of a crowd."

In the New York *Evening Sun* for April 11th, Mr. Henry McBride, referring to THE ARTS editorial, comments in part: " . . . It takes no especial courage to oppose the Academy, for the intelligent members of the community have been disapproving of it these dozen years past, but it does take courage to oppose a 'drive.' We have made a fetich of these drives, and most people meekly submit as each new one is announced and prepare to be bullied into subscribing. After Mr. Watson's frankness this latest drive is going to be difficult." Mr. McBride thereupon quotes from THE ARTS editorial to the extent of half a column.

The critic of the *Brooklyn Eagle,* Helen Appleton Read, on her page for April 19th, devotes much space to the question raised by the attempt of the Academy to corral its six millions, basing her remarks upon the editorial in the last issue of THE ARTS. The following paragraph will suffice to show the position of this critic:

"Six million dollars in the hands of an organization which has stood for the strongly biased censorship in its own exhibitions would result in nation-wide censorship. Academy exhibitions would travel from coast to coast, the annual exhibitions of smaller cities would be governed entirely by Academy standards. The public would believe that the Academy, what with new schools and buildings and lots of money, was the real and only representative body of American art as doubtless it should be, and the growing understanding that art existed outside of the Academy circles would be stunted.

"Personally I feel that the demand is a big piece of publicity for their centennial which opens in Washington next fall, and that the chances of getting their six millions are slim. . . . "

In addition to newspaper comment the editorial in last month's number has aroused marked and cordial approval in the form of letters from individual artists. As an example of such approval, we give part of a letter from Mr. Charles Burchfield. Writing of the editorial in question, he says that it "expresses a sentiment to which I, of course, wholeheartedly subscribe. There never has been, is not and never can be, any group of men anywhere so all-knowing that they have a right to censor an exhibition of art. That which is bad art will ultimately censor itself, and anyhow, if the public wants bad art, they have a right to it. I have no personal quarrel with juries, for I have never been turned down by one, but I do not believe in them on principle—I would be just as bad as anyone on a jury should I let my likes and dislikes govern my choices. I entered the Independent Show this year, not because other avenues are closed to me, but because I believed in their principle and believe that all artists who believe in free art expression should send their best to such shows.

"You have defined the National Academy and its place in American art endeavor perfectly. It is a narrow clique of reactionaries and its exhibitions are not as important as the first one-man show of some new unknown in a side gallery in New York. I am sure that all American artists who believe in free and 'wide-open' art will agree with me and stand back of you."



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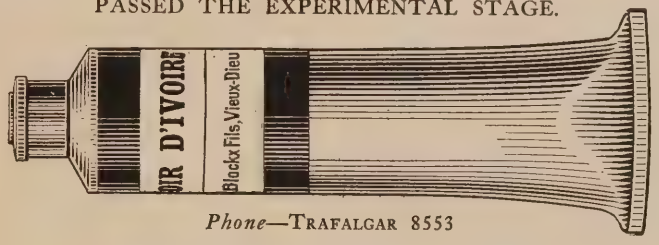
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of THE ARTS, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1925.

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared William A. Robb, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of THE ARTS, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443 Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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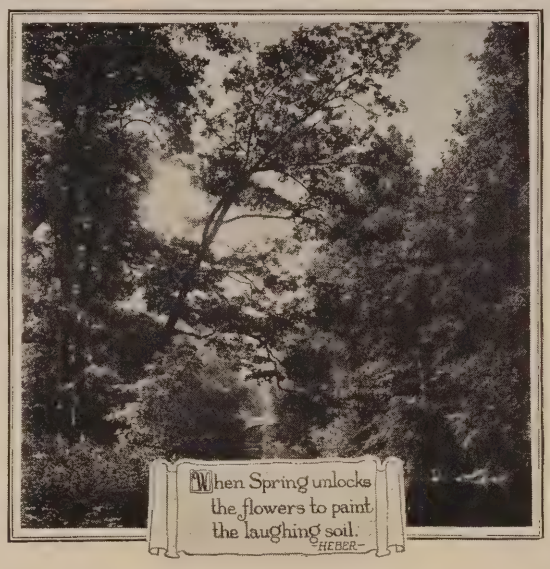
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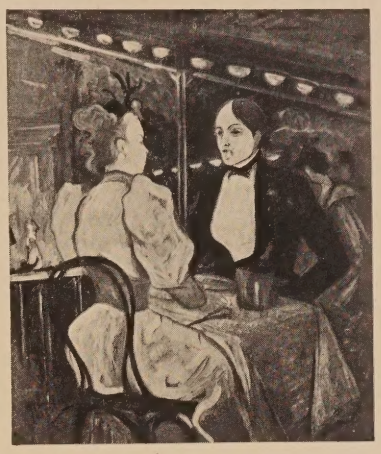
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